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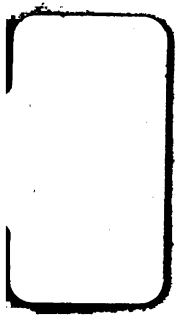

THE

MOUNTAINEER.

BY

CONRAD SPEECE, D. D.

Since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavour to obtain good customs. BACON.

A NEW EDITION.

STAUNTON, VA.

Printed by Isaac Collett.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following essays were furnished to Mr. Isaac Collett of Staunton, and inserted in his respectable weekly paper, the Republican Farmer. They have been twice republished, in the form of a volume. In this third edition, the author has carefully revised his work, and given it his best corrections.—To each number is prefixed the date of its original appearance in the Farmer; and all communications are distinguished by the letter C annexed.

A few slight errors have been observed.

P. 31, L. 10, *for* its its *read* its.
— 69, — 30, *for* extasy *read* ecstacy.
— 134, — 8, *for* life *read* his life.
— 139, — 24, *for* mothers's *read* mother's.
— 164, — 14, *for* remembrace *read* remembrance.

THE MOUNTAINEER.

No. 1. JULY 29, 1813.

Introductory.

HAVING passed the meridian of life, not without some habits of reading, observation, and reflection, I intend to fill a column of the Republican Farmer, now and then, with miscellaneous matter under the title of the Mountaineer.

To introduce one's self to the world in this way is a serious affair; and I feel it to be so, in common with most of those who engage in the same adventure. Standing before judges who are and ought to be rigidly impartial, I confess that I await with a degree of anxiety the event of my trial. The disclosure of the motives which actuate me will probably be demanded; and it shall be given with the promptitude and frankness of an honest man. Pecuniary emolument is not among my designs. Of the value of praise I will not affect to be insensible; I mean the praise of the wise and virtuous portion of mankind. To gain the esteem of those who are worthy to be esteemed is an object of exertion, and a source of gratification, of which I see no reason to be ashamed. Should it come to my knowledge that a judicious father, on receiving the Farmer, called his children around him with a congratulating smile, in order to present them a new Mountaineer; or that some ingenuous young man or maiden, devoted to improvement of mind and heart, eagerly turned over the paper in search of one of my numbers, and read it in preference to silly romances, and the squabbles of angry politicians; I freely avow that the discovery of such facts would afford me great

pleasure. But so far as I can ascertain what passes in my own breast, my principal inducement to this undertaking is a sincere desire to do good. We live in a world abounding with ignorance, vice, and sorrow. No man who fears God and loves his fellow creatures can look without emotion upon such a scene; and it is as true, that no man who cordially wishes for a better state of things should abandon the hope of being instrumental in bringing it about. For my part, I feel it to be an imperious duty to contribute my small share of effort for promoting the public welfare. The success depends on HIM who is the Fountain of wisdom, and by whose blessing alone any of our enterprises can be conducted to a prosperous issue.

I ought to lay before my readers, at setting out, some account of what they may expect from the Mountaineer. But I find it much easier to settle my limits, not to be transgressed, than to describe minutely the large field within which I shall hold myself at liberty to range. My speculations shall contain nothing incompatible with the holy doctrines and precepts of the gospel of Christ; nothing which can offend the strictest delicacy, or tinge the cheek of modesty with a blush; nothing of personal abuse, the vile employment of those who love to indulge their own malignant passions, and to blow the flames of discord in society. Confined, willingly and sacredly, by these bounds, I shall submit to general attention, from time to time, something of religion, and of morality as founded on religious principles; reflections on education, intellectual and moral; recommendations of valuable books, new or old, supposed not to be extensively known; remarks on prevailing maxims and manners; in a word, whatever I may deem likely to be profitable to the majority of my readers. While I profess myself an ardent lover of polite literature, a friend to wit and humour when directed to useful purposes; I think it fair to give notice that this work will be marked by religious thought and moral admo-

nition as its leading characteristics. That I shall never touch upon politics, I do not say; but I shall do it seldom, and always in a spirit and mode calculated to heal divisions, and not to exasperate them. In my mind there is no doubt that the masses of people composing our two great political parties are equally upright in their aims and intentions. It is not in the love of our country that we differ, but in our judgment of the best measures for maintaining her honour and advancing her prosperity.

How often my numbers may appear, or how long they may be continued, I cannot pretend to foresee. I may be disappointed in my hopes of assistance. I may find myself pressed with other and indispensable avocations. I may discover that the public would rather have my room than my company; particularly at a time like this, when every heart burns for news from our frontier lines, darkened as they are by the storms of war. In any of these cases I shall consider myself fully warranted to suspend, or even abruptly to drop these my humble labours, without feeling any of that guilt which results from the violation of a promise.

No. 2. August 5, 1813.

Assistance Requested.

I have already intimated my hope of being aided in the attempt which I have taken in hand. That I stand in need of aid I am deeply sensible. The task before me is an arduous one; so arduous that the abilities of a solitary mind, I might almost say however endowed, would be insufficient to execute it well. To render these papers efficacious, they must be interesting. Without a vital spirit of thought, and a variety of composition, it will be impossible to attract and to fix the attention of the public; especially of the young, who are so apt to start aside from every thing serious

and didactic, and to whom, nevertheless, I am most solicitous to be useful. I do, therefore, with all respect and earnestness, ask the cooperation of those friends to religion, good morals, and sound taste, who are able to help me, and who feel concerned for the improvement and happiness of their fellow men.

Will want of leisure be assigned as a sufficient reason for disregarding my request? Let me observe that long and laboured treatises are not the things I desire. Such productions, indeed, however excellent they might be, would not suit my plan, as each number of my work must necessarily be of very moderate extent. And I beg those persons, of either sex, who possess a habit of writing, and think favourably of my design, to reflect that if they can spare me occasionally a few hours of their time, they may lay me and my readers under great obligations by preparing a number or two for the Mountaineer.

Will help be refused me on the ground that so little good is likely to be done by publishing short essays in a newspaper? Let us beware of deluding ourselves with plausible excuses for our indolence or our despondency. And permit me to inquire whether it is not better to do a little good than to do none? Most of the happy changes which take place in this untoward world are achieved slowly, a little at a time; by slight impressions often repeated; and above all, by the exertions of several agents united in carrying on a common purpose. The sea is made up of single drops; and each drop contributes to the formation of that mighty mass of waters. But farther, how can any of us know the amount of good which may be accomplished by a few wholesome sentiments flowing warm from the heart, conveyed in words well chosen, and attended with a blessing from heaven? How delightful to a benevolent mind is the consciousness, or even the hope, of an instrumentality in rescuing a human being from the fangs of vice and folly; in fastening in a human heart some good resolution, which

may have a share in preparing that heart for the enjoyment of a blissful eternity!

As I am to feel myself responsible to the public for every doctrine and every expression which will appear in this series of papers, I must claim full liberty to revise and to alter any piece communicated to me, according to my best judgment. If, however, any correspondent forbid this, his performance shall either be published as written, or otherwise disposed of as he may choose to prescribe.

No. 3. AUGUST 12, 1813.

Beauties of the Morning Hour.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

AS I am a warm admirer of the beauties of nature, I cannot but regret that one of her most delightful spectacles is so generally disregarded. I allude to the dawn of day; the appearances which present themselves in a clear morning from the first tinge of light till the rising of the sun. The faint gleam which announces that the night is over; the golden waves of light, becoming every moment more vivid, rising and spreading rapidly over the eastern sky; the emergence of mountains, hills, fields, meadows, and streams, from the gloom of darkness, like a new creation springing out of chaos; the various songs of innumerable birds rendering the homage of their joy to the Creator; compose, all together, a scene inexpressibly more attractive and splendid than any of the works of man. To waste in superfluous sleep this "sweet hour of prime," this hour more delicious than all others, I must pronounce to be a contempt of nature not easily to be forgiven.

But it is not merely through the eye and the ear that we are enchanted by the opening of the day: it becomes still more interesting by the associated ideas

which it excites in a contemplative mind. It presents to me the image of hope fixing her eager eye upon the object of her desire, exulting in her growing probabilities of success, and moving forward with accelerated steps to fruition. It makes me think of the escape from long continued sorrow, of which all mankind have considered darkness the most striking emblem, to gladness and joy. It gives me the picture of a dear friend, returning after years of absence, years clouded with uncertainty about his fate, to cheer my soul with his smiles of unabated attachment. When I gaze on the dawn, I am often reminded of the rosy blush which mantled in the cheek of Amanda when I besought her to be mine; when she half concealed her glowing face upon my bosom, and softly murmured the tender emotions of her heart. The light of the morning suggests to me many a pleasing anticipation of the improvements of my lovely boy, my Florio. I seem to mark his vigorous advances in learning and science; his mind illuminated, strengthened, and adorned with knowledge; his feeling heart expanded with every devout and generous affection, and confirmed in every honourable principle of action. Looking onward to the meridian of his manhood, I see him beloved and respected, the delight of his friends, and a blessing to his country.

The bible, that rich treasury of all that is eloquent as well as all that is holy, has not omitted to notice the charming appearance of the morning hour. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The kind of life upon earth which befits an heir of immortality, a candidate for a seat beyond the skies, begins with some feeble glimmerings of knowledge concerning himself as a sinner, and the method of his restoration to the friendship of God; accompanied with a desire, weak and wavering, perhaps, but a sincere desire to serve God and enjoy his favour. Increasing light flows upon the inquiring mind from the scriptures. Prejudi-

ces and errors give way to the energy of truth. The humble disciple of the inspired volume sees with more clearness, and feels with livelier sensibility, that his only safety lies in union with the Saviour; that his best dignity and happiness are involved in the conformity of his tempers and conduct to the divine will. His purposes to live a life of reason and religion gradually ripen into habits. His conquest over temptation becomes more easy; his patience under trials, and trust in almighty protection, more established. Bearing daily fruits of righteousness, he tastes an exquisite satisfaction in the favourable testimony of his own conscience, and in hope of the approbation of Heaven. Thus he travels forward, with an improving lustre of piety and benevolence, and with growing peace and joy in his own breast, until he shall enter into the perfection of light, holiness, and felicity in the eternal world. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

Your Friend,

ALBERT.

No. 4. AUGUST 26, 1813.

The Mischiefs of Party Spirit.

WE all agree in censuring the spirit of party, and in lamenting its prevalence amongst us. Is it impossible to stop the progress of this evil, and prevent the dreadful consequences which it tends to produce?

Party spirit implies some difference of opinion; of which the subjects are sometimes important, and sometimes extremely trivial. But party spirit is not itself difference of opinion; nor does it necessarily follow that because our sentiments do not coincide we must fall into the state of feeling now under consideration. It is a thing voluntarily connected with the infirmities of human judgment; a compound of the most odious and tormenting passions which infest our na-

sure; such as ambition, pride, envy, suspicion, and fiery resentment. In one word, it is malice against all those who belong to an opposite party.

This spirit often associates itself with real or pretended differences in matters of religion. And what an immensity of mischief it has done, in this form, to the purest and best of all religions, what misery it has brought upon nations and individuals, is known to every reader of the history of mankind. Vile hypocrites, destitute of conscience, and rash, dark-minded bigots, clothing their unhallowed passions with the name of zeal for God and his truth, have armed themselves with fire and sword, and deluged the earth with blood. Yet there is nothing which genuine religion abhors and condemns more strongly than this very spirit of intolerance and persecution.

At this day every good man sees and mourns the spirit of party which distracts our country in relation to the war in which we are engaged. For the motives of ambitious leaders, or greedy hunters of office and emolument, of whatever party, I will not be responsible. But these are not the body of the American people. It is absurd to suppose that the people are actuated by any other than upright and patriotic intentions in the political courses which they pursue. And yet with what bitter animosity do they quarrel, what terms of invective do they incessantly heap on each other! To illustrate the subject, I will state a case. Would to God it were an imaginary case merely; but there is scarcely a neighbourhood, I fear, throughout the country, where it is not in some degree realized. Here are two citizens, whom, for distinction's sake, we will call Severus and Ernestus. They are alike men of respectable understandings, and have characters well established for sound moral worth. Each of them possesses considerable property, and is surrounded with a rising family. Severus believes we had no sufficient cause for waging the present war against England; and adds that, should he be mista-

ken in this, still it is certain we had far more abundant grounds for commencing a war with France. Ernestus, on the other hand, who is one of the majority, maintains with as much confidence that we had just cause of war against England, and against her alone. They have formed opinions equally opposite in regard to the policy of the war. Severus thinks we entered into it with a deplorable precipitancy; and that it is not likely to benefit, but deeply to injure us in the result. He is satisfied we might speedily make peace without national dishonour, and of course that we ought to make it. Ernestus deems it to have been absolutely necessary to begin the war when we did, without delaying it any longer; and none of the disasters we have suffered shake his firm expectation that it will eventuate so as to preserve the honour and improve the prosperity of his country. How all these contradictory sentiments came to be adopted, it might not be easy to tell, nor is it my business to inquire. I simply state the facts. These neighbours, feeling a similar and lively concern for the public good, converse, when they meet, on hardly any other subject but the war. Soon after they start the contest, however, cool, patient discussion is abandoned, and their faces are seen flushed with angry passion. With their attempts at argument they mingle reproachful language, and load each other with the most hateful names and imputations. The air is burdened with the exasperating sounds of demagogue, jacobin, attachment to France and her tyrant; faction, tory, subserviency to the enemy; and so on. Thus friendship and neighbourly kindness yield their place to alienation, disgust, and rooted hostility of feeling. In some moment when audience might be obtained, would it not be well for a third person to address Severus and Ernestus in language such as the following?

'Friends and neighbours, you do indeed differ in opinion, and upon points of no small importance. One of you must be in error; and it is desirable that

you be united in the discovery and reception of the truth. You profess a wish to convince one another. But is there any prospect of your doing it in this way? Is it not more probable that both of you will be driven farther from truth, which may lie between you? Why this heat of controversy? Why these reviling epithets and charges? Have you not long known each other to be honest men, and cheerfully avowed the conviction? Have you not both the very same motives to love your country? Is it not the land of your birth, or of your adoption; and does it not contain the dearest connexions and interests which you have in the world? Besides, who has conferred upon either of you such a claim to infallibility as authorizes him to call the other a fool or a villain? Consider too, I beseech you, whither this rage of party spirit is carrying you. It is even now poisoning the fountains of social happiness. And may it not one day, if its progress be not checked, convert a nation of brothers into ferocious bands, armed for mutual destruction? Look at revolutionary England in the days of Charles the First. Turn your eyes to revolutionary France, and Robespierre's reign of terror. Christians, where is the mild, benevolent genius of your religion? Men, where is your humanity? Citizens, where is that spirit of mutual concession, and where that wise sense of interest, by which you were bound together as one people? In fine, let the laws of our country be respected and obeyed. Let inquiry, discussion, and suffrage be free. They must be free, or our republican liberty is gone forever. Let us pity the weaknesses of our nature wherever we see them; and let us banish from our hearts this abominable spirit of party, as the bane of our internal tranquillity, and of every thing that makes his country dear to the patriot's affections.'

I close this paper with more of despondency than of hope, knowing that it is written almost in vain. A plea for candour, moderation, and brotherly love, will

be but faintly heard amidst the roar of political contention. Alas, there are moments when I feel the difficulty of practising the lesson which I am recommending to others. But I dare not forget how reasonable that lesson is. Perhaps it may do a little good; and a little is all that I expect to accomplish by any of these speculations.

No. 3. SEPTEMBER 9, 1813.

Neglect of the Education of Children.

THE following is a dark picture of the state of education in our country. Whether my correspondent has exaggerated the facts on which he animadverts, my readers must judge. The subject is one of primary importance; and it is one on which I design to offer, in the course of this work, more than a few serious reflections. In the mean while, this remonstrance, brief and general as it is, deserves to be heard.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

At my first entrance upon the stage of public life, I was impressed with the opinion that mankind were more intellectual beings than I have since found them to be. Having, for several years, a large share of leisure from business, I devoted much of it to my favourite study of human nature; a study which, if I mistake not, has produced me a greater harvest of discomfort than of either delight or profit. Be this as it may, I have arrived at a conclusion, the truth of which, I think, will be manifest to any attentive observer; namely, that most men are far below that degree of mental improvement which was within their reach. I am compelled to esteem them very inadequately qualified to connect, compare, and analyze ideas; to detect the false premises from which false inferences are deduced; to strip the garb of sophistry from the body of error; or to combat plausible non-

sense with the weapons of truth and reason. They hear, a lecture on religion, ethics, or politics, and adopt or reject it according to the quarter from which it comes. They learn the routine of common employments, and go through them, perhaps well enough, mechanically. Beyond this, they make only few and feeble excursions.

Yet why is this the case, since we know that the mind is naturally active and susceptible of cultivation? Why does it not rise into exertion by its own will and power? Why not open its doors to the light of knowledge? Why not pursue the channels of information to their sources? The answer to these questions lies in a few words: the mind, neglected in its early years, loses its native vigour, falls short of the ripeness of manhood, and remains ever after a dwarf and an invalide. Parents, whose care it should have been to lead their children up to the temple of wisdom, have been more solicitous to immure them in the vaults of avarice. Instead of unfolding to them the volumes of science at the feet of some Gamaliel, they have trained them to think no lessons worthy of their attention but those which subserve the accumulation of wealth.

The original endowments of intellect are bestowed in very unequal degrees upon individuals of the human family. Yet from nature there is scarcely more disparity between the minds of men than from the difference of their treatment. How commonly do we see one with moderate understanding rise to high distinction, and become a benefactor to society, by the proper exercise and direction of his powers; while another, naturally his superior, remains in that obscurity and insignificance to which his father's neglect and his own listlessness have doomed him. It follows that parents who have any surplus of money beyond what is indispensably necessary to the maintenance of the household, (and most parents have, or may have such a surplus,) should apply it, or a portion of it, to the education of their children, as the best gift that

can be conferred upon them. Every nerve should be strained to introduce them to the rudiments, at least, of practical knowledge. He who fails in this is chargeable with want of due affection for his offspring, and with all the errors and miseries to which they are exposed by their ignorance.

The wild reveries of Rousseau, so improperly denominated a method of education, have been suffered to operate with a very pernicious influence throughout the civilized world. He has taught, and miserly or deluded parents, have imbibed the doctrine, that the mind in childhood ought to be left free, uncontrolled by any authority; that it may advance to maturity unincumbered with prejudice, and unshackled by any of the sentiments of times past or present. How is this possible, if the child grow up in such a world as ours? But the scheme is in fact as mischievous as it is visionary. Great care doubtless should be used to guard the minds of the young from prejudices, especially such as would be very injurious to their welfare. If, however, under this pretence, children be not diligently led in the paths of truth and virtue, they will, they must become the prey of corruption and folly. O that the system of Pythagoras were rather imitated; that our youth were required to listen, with respectful silence, to the instructions of age and experience; to trace with untiring energy the course of science; to learn wisdom from the study of nature, and still more from the holy and merciful revelation of nature's God!

C. A.

No. 6. SEPTEMBER 9, 1813.

Good Pronunciation Recommended.

IT sometimes happens that men who have spent much time in studying the languages of Rome and Greece exhibit a very imperfect acquaintance with

their own. Instances are yet more frequent of intelligent persons who pronounce their native tongue incorrectly. To this latter subject I wish to call the attention of my young readers; it being as real a point of propriety, in the use of our language, that we pronounce our words rightly, as that we choose them with precision, and put them together in a good style.

And here I am aware that I have various objections to encounter. It will be confidently demanded of me, first of all, what is the use of studying pronunciation? Is it not enough to speak so as to be understood? In order to answer these, I will ask a few other questions. Why do you take care to have your dress agreeable to the existing fashion? What is the use of doing this, when your clothes might be constructed so as to ensure the substantial purposes at a much smaller expense? Why are you so unwilling to appear ignorant or awkward with regard to the customary forms of civility in social intercourse? Why do you blush at the consciousness of deficiency in these little things? The reply to all this is, that we perceive something disagreeable in the want of conformity to a settled standard; and therefore we feel that it is proper to shun singularity by following the current mode, when reason and conscience do not interpose with a prohibition. So it is in the pronunciation of our language. It is a point of conformity to a standard; and to those who know and respect that standard, every departure from it must appear improper and disagreeable.

But what is the standard? I answer, *the Pronouncing Dictionary of Walker*. Not many years have passed since the first attempts in this way were made, except as to the accent of words. Walker's book, I may safely assert, has superseded all works of the kind which we had before; and, though not absolutely perfect, is now, in general, the acknowledged guide of pronunciation in every part of the world where our language is used. Hence it results that though we may pronounce our words according to the custom of

our little neighbourhood or district, we may be abundantly offending the ear of an auditor trained to accuracy on the subject.

But is not the pronunciation of the English language continually changing? And is it worth while to take any pains about a thing so mutable? I reply, every fashion is changing; yet we employ some care not to be out of the fashion of the day. Our language itself is as liable to change, and does actually change as much, in other and more important respects as in this; but we must not discard our esteem for it and study of it on that account. The credit of Walker's valuable performance, I presume, will prevent the change of pronunciation from being near so rapid in future as it has formerly been. And after all, I should not urge the thing with much zeal, did I not know that the exchange of a very faulty for a good pronunciation is of easy attainment; not to the aged, I confess, but certainly to the young. If you desire to pronounce well, and happen to be so situated as to converse daily for a considerable length of time with a correct speaker, you will acquire the habit almost insensibly. But many have not this opportunity. I will, therefore, point out another method. And though I know that the superficial will deride the mention of any thing like reading a dictionary, I must venture it, and abide the consequence. The great difficulty is to find out the words of which our pronunciation has been defective. For want of this knowledge, I have heard even respectable scholars pronounce wretchedly, while they had the standard at hand, and professed to conform to it. I propose, then, that you take a flying course through the columns of Walker; marking on a sheet of paper the words which you find you have hitherto pronounced wrong, together with the rectified pronunciation. Look over this sheet occasionally, until you have corrected your errors. The whole business will be accomplished in a very little time, and with little labour; so little that I do not see how any studious youth, and

especially any one who is or aims to be a public speaker, can excuse himself in the neglect of a task so easy.

I have only to add, that whoever wishes to become a master of good pronunciation should use, with Walker's Dictionary, his *Key to the Pronunciation of Proper Names.*

No. 7. SEPTEMBER 16, 1813.

The Pleasures of Piety.

THE following letter was communicated by one who has been my friend from our earliest years. For the too strong expressions of encouragement which it contains, they who understand what friendship is will know how to make the due allowance.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

SIR,

I recognise in your writings the style and sentiments of an old friend, with whom, in the unanxious and joyous days of youth, I trod the walks of classical literature: and what affords recollections still more grateful, with whom I studied in that school where the lessons of heavenly wisdom are taught; where the vain philosophy of this world is demonstrated to be an ignis fatuus, which misleads its votaries to their own undoing; and where the attainment of true humility is evidence of the most honourable proficiency; even the school of Jesus Christ. This recognition warms my heart, almost as much as the countenance of the friend of my youth is accustomed to do it; and I say, not in the cold and formal way of the world, but in the sincerity of genuine friendship, success attend you! May you effectually oppose vice and folly. May you exorcise the foul fiend of party spirit from your happy valley; and be instrumental in promoting the culture of manly taste, sound morality, and unfeigned piety, among its inhabitants.

I indulge the hope that, along with the other good fruits of your labours, you will convince your readers that no man is obliged to be dull because he is religious; and that the most refined taste is not in the smallest degree inconsistent with the most fervent piety. You will agree with me that such an achievement demands your utmost exertions. There are many persons, and among them some of no mean endowments, who have united so firmly in their minds the idea of religion with that of dulness, or want of taste, that they hardly think of the one without the other; a combination of very unhappy tendency, both to themselves and to all who are under their influence. Of the fact, that numbers have fallen into this obliquity of judgment, there can be no doubt; and it is not more certain than it is strange and inexcusable. We may remark, as we pass, that were religion and taste at war with each other, we need no oracle to tell us which of the two would be entitled to the victory. But they are in truth not enemies, but allies. That subjugation of the passions which is effected by religion is most favourable to the improvement of the understanding; and the objects of taste appear clothed with new charms to a mind powerfully impressed by the doctrines of the gospel, and call into exercise its most delightful sensibilities.

The pleasure afforded by objects of this kind depends more on the ideas and emotions habitually associated with them than on the objects themselves. For instance; when you, in your morning walk, hear your mountain groves and woody vales made vocal by the singing of birds, that rapture with which your heart exults does not proceed in any great measure from the mere sounds uttered by those little songsters; for these sounds are often quite unmusical, and sometimes very rough and harsh. But it is the voice of gladness that you hear; it suggests to you the idea of enjoyment. These notes, uncouth as they may be, are indeed expressive of all the happiness that can be enjoyed by

the creatures which utter them; and the heart which feels no sympathy with happiness should claim no kindred with man, no participation in that benevolent taste which dignifies our nature.

Now what is to hinder the disciple of Jesus Christ from entering into these feelings, and rejoicing with all things that live and rejoice? But he does not rest in sympathy alone: he springs forth to the adoration of the great Author of all felicity and all beauty. He traces the glorious attributes of God in all the productions of his hands, and in every work of genius and masterly skill which the divine inspiration enables man to produce. Whatever is in itself good and delicious carries the pious man home to the Deity. And if religious ideas and susceptibilities be thus associated with the various objects of taste, so that, when presented, such objects shall serve to kindle into a gentle flame those pure and sweet affections in which piety essentially consists, how exquisite must be the pleasure! Let the hills and the vales, the woodlands and the meadows, of your romantic district, when arrayed in verdure and laughing with abundance, convey to the mind of the beholder a remembrance of the overflowing bounty of the beneficent God; let this beholder be one who can say, in the spirit of adoption, and of the warmest gratitude, "my Father made them all," my reconciled God and Father; and he will be filled with a higher and a holier joy than any that can be known by the mere man of the world. In other words, whatever is beautiful, or grand, or sublime, in heaven or on earth, is enjoyed with a far better relish by the Christian than by any other human being. Religion, then, instead of making men dull and stupid, trains them up to the most exalted contemplations, and blesses them with pleasures as elegant as they are unadulterated. However unsightly and sombre to the eye of the worldling the paths of piety may appear; yet is the region through which they lead so set with goodly flowers, and abounding with prospects so love-

ly to the sight and so gladsome to the heart, that the land of Eden was not more enchanting. But you can do justice to this subject; I cannot. Let your time and your talents, therefore, be devoted to the work of recommending the religion of the gospel, as the best ornament of the learned, and best instructor of the ignorant; the purest source of earthly peace and satisfaction, and only foundation of everlasting happiness. May God bless you!

Your ancient Friend,

C. BENEVOLUS.

No. 8. SEPTEMBER 23, 1813.

Eloquence of Patrick Henry.

I ESTEEM it one of the happy events of my life that I have heard the eloquence of that extraordinary man, Patrick Henry. Few such men have ever lived; and I do not expect to "look upon his like again." Shall we call him the Cicero of Virginia? I think he more strongly resembled Demosthenes. Indeed he seems to have possessed the united excellencies of both the celebrated orators of antiquity. By the way, I have fallen reluctantly into a degree of heresy in my estimation of Cicero. He appears to me to have great defects as well as great merits. His art in conducting a cause is admirable, but not quite sufficient to conceal itself. His language is splendidly elegant; but we cannot help thinking of the labour which it must have cost Cicero to make it so. My deepest quarrel, however, is with his egotism and vanity. He was too little capable of forgetting himself, and thirsted too eagerly for popular applause. I have somewhere met with the following comparison, (I quote from memory,) between Cicero and Demosthenes, which I think must be founded in fact. "When Cicero finished a speech, his hearers exclaimed, what a fine orator Cicero is! How ingenious in argument, how brilliant

in language! When Demosthenes concluded an oration, nobody thought any thing of Demosthenes. The universal cry was, to arms, citizens; let us march and dethrone Philip!" But whither am I rambling? Let us return to Henry.

Many years ago I was at the trial, in one of our district courts, of a man charged with murder. The case was briefly this. The prisoner had gone, in the execution of his office as a constable, to arrest a slave who had been guilty of some misconduct, and bring him to justice. Expecting opposition in the business, the constable took several men with him, some of them armed. They found the slave on the plantation of his master, within view of the house, and proceeded to seize and bind him. His mistress, seeing the arrest, came down and remonstrated vehemently against it. Finding her efforts unavailing, she went off to a barn where her husband was, who was presently perceived running briskly to the house. It was known that he always kept a loaded rifle lying over his door. The constable now desired his company to remain where they were, taking care to keep the slave in custody, while he himself would go to the house to prevent mischief. He accordingly ran toward the house. When he arrived within a short distance of it, the master appeared, coming out of the door with his rifle in his hand. Some witnesses said that as he came to the door he drew the cock of the piece, and was seen in the act of raising it to the position of firing. But upon these points there was not an entire agreement in the evidence. The constable, standing near a small building in the yard, at this instant fired, and the fire had a fatal effect. No previous malice was proved against him; and his plea upon the trial was that he had taken the life of the assailant in necessary self-defence.

A great mass of testimony was delivered. This was commented on with considerable ability by the attorney for the commonwealth, and by another law-

yer engaged by the friends of the deceased to assist the prosecution. The prisoner was also defended in elaborate speeches by two respectable advocates. These proceedings brought the day to a close. The general whisper, through a crowded house, was that the man was guilty, and could not be saved. About the dusk of the evening candles were brought, and Henry arose. His manner was exactly that which the *British Spy* describes with so much felicity; plain, simple, and entirely unassuming. "Gentlemen of the jury," said he, "I dare say we are all very much fatigued with this tedious trial. The prisoner at the bar has been well defended already; but it is my duty to offer you some farther observations in behalf of this unfortunate man. I shall aim at brevity. But should I take up more of your time than you expect, I hope you will hear me with patience when you consider that blood is concerned." I cannot admit the possibility that any one who never heard Henry speak should be made fully to conceive the force of impression which he gave to these few words, blood is concerned. I had been on my feet through the day, pushed about in the crowd, and was excessively weary. I was strongly of opinion too, notwithstanding all the previous defensive pleadings, that the prisoner was guilty of murder; and I felt anxious to know how the matter would terminate. Yet when Henry had uttered these words, the state of my feelings underwent an instantaneous change: I found every thing within me answering at once, yes, since blood is concerned, in the name of all that is righteous, go on; we will hear you with patience until the rising of to-morrow's sun. This bowing of the soul must have been universal; for the profoundest silence reigned, as if our very breath had been suspended. The spell of the magician was upon us, and we stood like statues around him. Under the touch of his genius every particular of the story assumed a new aspect, and his cause became continually more bright and promising.

At length he arrived at the fatal act itself. "You have been told, gentlemen, that the prisoner was bound by every obligation to avoid the supposed necessity of firing, by leaping behind a house near which he stood at that moment. Had he been attacked with a club, or with stones, the argument would be unanswerable; and I should feel myself compelled to give up the defence in despair. But surely I need not tell you, gentlemen, how wide is the difference between sticks or stones and double-triggered, loaded rifles cocked at your breast." The effect of this terrific image, exhibited in this great orator's peerless manner, cannot be described. I dare not attempt to delineate the paroxysm of emotion which it excited in every heart. The result of the whole was that the prisoner was acquitted; with the perfect approbation, I believe, of the numerous assembly who attended the trial.

What was it that gave such transcendent force to the eloquence of Henry? His reasoning powers were good; but they have been equaled, and more than equaled, by those of many other men. His imagination was exceedingly quick, and commanded all the stores of nature as materials for illustrating his subject. His voice and delivery were inexpressibly happy. But his most irresistible charm was the vivid feeling of his cause with which he spoke. Such feeling infallibly communicates itself to the breast of the hearer.

Patrick Henry acted a very conspicuous part in our revolutionary struggle. Ardent in maintaining the liberties of his country, it was he, above all others, who aroused the spirit of his fellow citizens to resist the oppressions of Britain, and to defy the power of her fleets and armies. What a feast of entertainment should we find in a well written life of this singular man, the boast of Virginia, and the wonder of his age!

No. 9. October 14, 1813.

On Evil Speaking.

THERE is no vice which moral writers have brought more diligently into view, scarcely any which they have censured more severely, than that of evil speaking. Their labours have doubtless had some repressive efficacy; but it is evident that this pernicious practice is still very far from being extinct. Who among my readers can assert that he has not often retired to his pillow with the painful consciousness of having said something to or of his neighbour which he ought not to have said? Alas, how much mischief is daily produced in society by the misuse of that unruly member, the tongue! And this being the case, why may not the Mountaineer put in his word of reflection and admonition upon the subject?

It is impossible to enumerate all the ways in which this fault is committed, or the sources whence it springs. Take a few instances by way of sample. We speak injuriously from resentment or malice. Instead of seeking the most favourable construction of our neighbour's conduct, waiting to hear his explanation or apology, and remembering our own infirmities and imperfections, we suffer our angry passions to burst into a flame, and give them vent in a volley of reproachful words. Perhaps we indulge feelings of settled malignity, after we have abundant reason to be pacified, and, it may be, even after we have professed to be so: malignity which seizes every occasion to vilify and hurt its object, and grows more bitter and active the longer it is harboured in the breast. We are guilty of evil speaking from envy. How few can see with pleasure, or even with tranquillity, the superior excellence of another! How few of us can bear to find a rival enjoying a greater share of fortune or of fame than ourselves! In such a situation our proper business is to redouble our assiduity in laudable exertion; and, whatever may be the event, to rest

contented with the allotments of divine providence. But we are apt to take a different course. We seem to think that raising ourselves and depressing others are one and the same thing; and that we give merit to ourselves in proportion as we pull their characters down. Hence the subtile, disparaging insinuation, the ingenious, deep-laid plot of detraction. Here is the trying, the vexatious tax which eminent worth and success have to pay for their advantages. No man can be greatly good or elevated, without becoming the butt of those base spirits who pine at distinction which they will not seek or cannot attain, and whose favourite employment it is to bring down all, if possible, to their own level. How detestable the passion! Yet who can lay his hand upon his heart, and say he feels not one spark of it there? Even where there is no sensibly malignant feeling, no express design to injure, we are often led into evil speaking by heedlessness, and a want of better materials to fill up conversation. It is a sound rule of morality, to speak well of our neighbours so far as we honestly can; and never to speak ill of any one, however true the charge may be, without some beneficial purpose to be accomplished by it. But we are almost continually departing from this rule. When we meet in company, we neglect the wide and pleasing fields of unforbidden knowledge. Destitute of a various store of ideas, or too indolent for instructive discussion, we slide almost of course into the unprofitable investigation of the characters and actions of those around us. We tell degrading truths, without any legitimate object. We repeat the idle, unascertained tale of scandal, with careless exaggerations of colouring. We wound the absent sometimes by saying things not improper in themselves, nor calculated to wound, but which we ought not to have committed to persons so liable to misunderstand or to misreport what is dropped in their hearing.

Our tongues were given us to be the means of mu-

tual instruction, or of innocent entertainment at the least. How shall we guard them from becoming instruments of dissension, strife, and misery? One expedient for avoiding positive evil in the case is to check the current of thought, the cheerful reciprocation of sentiment, by the constant exercise of a hard, prudential caution. But to this expedient there are two strong objections. One is that the task is very difficult. If you are conscious of any such thing as a flow of spirits, only think of the labour of watching and weighing with nice scrupulosity every word that you utter. The drudgery is intolerable. The other objection is that this habit of reserve must render us unamiable, a burden upon our company rather than an acquisition to it. A man of this cast is so far from contributing his portion, as every one ought, to keep up the conversation and make it pleasant, that he inevitably mars the enjoyment of all with whom he associates.

A much better way to escape the vice which has been depicted is to lay up in the mind a copious fund of matter for improving and agreeable discourse. Here we may see, as well as in many other points of view, the utility of a habit of reading. With so many rich treasures of interesting science and elegant literature open before us, I blush to find, as I often do, that after telling each other, without conveying one particle of information, that the weather is cold or warm, clear or cloudy, we are presently at a loss how to get along. While we might be feasting upon history, poetry, or the wonders of this visible creation; especially while we might illuminate and delight one another with the contents of the sacred volume, unrivaled as it is in wisdom and every species of eloquence; we busy ourselves with trifling remarks upon trifling fashions; we plunge into the fiery furnace of political disputation; or we increase the corruption of our hearts, and eventually impair our own and our neighbour's quiet, by talebearing and slander.

The complete government of the tongue, however, is only to be learned in the school of our divine Master, Jesus Christ; and the subject is by no means unworthy of so serious a reference. We know that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If bad passions be suffered to dwell in our bosoms; if we be selfish, proud, envious, impatient, and unforgiving; these hateful tempers will influence our tongues in speaking of others. It cannot be otherwise. The only effectual cure for the evil is to learn, from the precepts and example of our Redeemer, to be meek and lowly in spirit, and to glow with benevolence to all, not only the good and gentle, but also the wicked and perverse. In proportion as we are impressed with the love of God to us, and with humble views of ourselves, we shall be delivered from the habit of despising and reviling others.

I take this occasion of avowing, once for all, that when I am looking abroad in quest of a remedy for any of the countless evils which originate in human depravity, I can never obtain any thing solid to rest my hopes upon but the religion of the bible. They who agree with me in this important idea, though they may find many defects in these papers, will regard my intentions with an indulgent eye. As to those who feel little or nothing for the happiness of man, or who hope to see it promoted without the aid of Christianity, I apprise them fairly that it is impossible they should meet with sentiment agreeable to their taste in the moral speculations of the Mountaineer.

No. 10. November 11, 1813.

Reflections on the Seasons of the Year.

AT a time of life too early for distinct recollection, I became fond of solitary rambles in the woods. The wild magnificence of nature, her mountains, her fo-

rests, and her resounding streams, had more powerful charms for me than any of the works of human art. Often have my friends smiled at the oddness of my taste, on my abandoning, for hours together, the lively domestic scene, and company which I acknowledged to be pleasant and dear to me, for the sake of roaming away by myself among the trees and rocks of my native hills. This propensity continues with me: it even strengthens with my advancing years; and I neither look nor wish for its its extirpation.

We are now at the close of autumn; a season which the lovers of rural nature contemplate as a gloomy one. Still I like to pursue my customary woodland excursions. The air, indeed, is at times rather too cool to be comfortable. The various fruits which the earth yields without the labour or care of man, and for which I yet retain a little of the relish of my boyhood, have nearly all disappeared. The rich foliage which constituted the glory of summer is withered; and falls fast at every breeze, with low, confused murmurs, to the ground. Indications of the near approach of winter are presented on every side. Yet the scene which I behold has a fascination for me which I could not easily resist; and fills my mind with a sort of melancholy far more precious than the gaiety and merriment of the crowded fireside.

It is impossible that I should look upon the decline of the year, and all its fading splendours, without falling into a pensive, moralizing strain of thought. I perceive and feel my own resemblance to the objects which surround me. The spring of my youth has long since passed away. Its innumerable schemes of interesting activity, and bright visions of unattainable joy, gave place to the realities of a troublesome and disappointing world. Even the summer of my manhood is exchanging its vigour for the infirmities of a later season. My limbs are becoming rigid; and my face begins to be furrowed with wrinkles. My locks grow thin; and with their auburne colour is gradually

blended the frost of years. Every annual revolution takes from me some portion of strength, some capability of enjoyment, to be restored no more. The winter of age is at hand; and death must ere long arrive and consign me to the grave.

I have said that the melancholy inspired by a view of the vegetable world in its decay is precious to my heart. This I apprehend to be owing, in a good measure, to the hope of returning spring. Were I impressed with the idea that this sombre appearance of nature would be perpetual; did I believe that the approaching winter would last forever, and that the loveliness of spring would never revisit the eye of man; my melancholy would be the reverse of precious; the wide creation would become a blank, and my heart would sink into all the anguish of despair.

And what is man without the hope of a future existence, the consoling prospect of inheriting a more peaceful and an immortal life? We have our little year upon the earth; a spring of sweet but transitory delight; a summer of mingled satisfactions and cares; an autumn of weakness and painful retrospection; a winter of decrepitude, disease, and sorrow, which must soon bring us down to the narrow chamber of silence. And is this all? Must all the towering aspirations of the mind, all the fervent feelings and desires of the heart, all our capacities for happiness, perish in the dust? Is the virtuous man, who endeavours to learn and to discharge all his duties, sentenced by the Author of his being to the tormenting labour of trying to reconcile himself to expectations so inexpressibly tremendous? No; reason renders it probable, and revelation gives us the certainty, that there is another and a better world, the true and everlasting home of all who live a life of religion. Let my body fall, and moulder in the ground; it shall be raised again, and reanimated with undecaying vigour. Let my spirit, expelled from its tenement of clay by the violence of sickness or the debility of age, take its

flight from all the objects of sense; it shall go to the bosom of God, the abode of unalloyed felicity. My soul and my body, reunited at the glorious, vernal morning of the resurrection, shall enjoy a fulness of bliss in heaven while eternity endures. Such is the inheritance which the gospel of Jesus Christ exhibits and ensures to his faithful disciples.

What, then, in the eye of sober reason, must be the character of that man who spends this fleeting life without any serious thought of a future state? In the view of the all-wise God, what must be the aspect of a soul destined to an unlimited duration in unutterable joy or wo, yet confining all its passions and pursuits to these diminutive toys which are so soon to vanish away forever? And what horrid forebodings of eternal misery must harass the guilty breast which can harbour and cherish the degrading, unnatural wish for annihilation! No, it is not superiority of talents that makes the sceptic assert his own kindred to the brutes which perish: it is his anxious but vain wish to reconcile a bad life with the hope of impunity hereafter; combined with his scorn of that mercy which is ready to forgive his transgressions, and render him an heir of heaven, upon the reasonable terms of repentance and submission to the gospel.

No. 11. DECEMBER 23, 1813.

The Heroism of Idleness.

HERE is a letter which wears a face rather astounding, especially at its commencement. What the writer means, I shall only request the people who love to do nothing to judge for themselves.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

When I say that idleness is to be the subject of this epistle, you will probably expect me to burst

forth in a strain of vehement censure. But in such an expectation you will be balked, and that most egregiously. I have a mind, with your leave, to undertake the defence of a habit which has hitherto been the standing butt of reprobation and contempt. And for this labour in support of idleness, I hope to have the thanks of the whole fraternity of idlers.

It is no whining petition for mercy, no string of flimsy excuses, that I am about to offer in behalf of my clients. No; I shall assume much more elevated ground. I say, then, that idleness is a thing full of dignity and grandeur; and that the idler, whatever may have been thought of him heretofore, is in reality a hero of the highest order. Is not a hero one who, with his eyes open, runs into great dangers and makes great sacrifices? I will prove that this is exactly what the idler does. And if he does all this without any adequate or rational object, I can only infer that the courage of his soul is so much the more disinterested and complete.

Idleness willingly renounces much of the pleasure of life.—As our Creator formed us for action, he has annexed no small gratification to the habit of exerting our faculties, whether of mind or body. We not only enjoy the thing that we wished for, when we have gained the possession of it; but we also enjoy it beforehand, in the contemplation, the hope, the steady course of activity, with which we pursue it. Hence it is found in fact that well directed industry promotes health, contentment, and cheerfulness. Idleness is notoriously an enemy to all these. It enfeebles both the body and the mind; and often have my heroes complained with bitterness of the misery of doing nothing, and having nothing to do; no object to fix their attention, no aim or expectation to animate them in the use of their powers.

Idleness is a disreputable habit, in the judgment of all the wise and worthy part of mankind. They constantly unite in rendering honour to industry, and

never speak of a character marked with indolence but in terms of indignation or contempt.—Now it surely implies a good stock of resolution to be idle in the very teeth of this strong verdict. Whatever support may be obtained from the opinion of those who pronounce it a mean, low-spirited affair to be of any service to themselves or the public, and who resolve to exist as drones in society, or burdens upon it; I must insist that it requires a large share of hardihood to face the alternate sneers and frowns of all whose approbation is worthy of any regard. Am I not demonstrating my idler to be a hero indeed?

Idleness is the sure way to fail of being successful in any of the respectable or profitable callings of life.—I ask my young reader, what is your prospect as to a situation and business in the world? Do circumstances point out agriculture as your destination? Are you preparing to be a tradesman, or a merchant? Have you the means and opportunity of becoming qualified for any of the learned professions, law, physic, and divinity? Do you wish to fill the office of a teacher of youth? Are you aiming at a place in the councils of your country? If you are one of that sex which was intended to be the helper, the joy, and the ornament of man, do you aspire to the character of a truly accomplished and useful woman? If you would occupy with advantage any one of these, or any other honourable station, industry is indispensably requisite to the attainment of your end. Daily observation of facts proves that you cannot reasonably expect to succeed without diligent, persevering application to the business which properly lies before you. Even if you possess great talents, so rare and so much envied, you are likely to sink far below what the world justly expects and demands of you, and to make but a pitiful figure in the public eye, if those talents be not improved by strict discipline and laborious cultivation. The idler, therefore, calmly gives up the hope, I mean all warrantable hope, of usefulness and honour

in the place to which he is destined. He can look forward without dismay to the prospect of being a blot upon some profession for which he is not fitted, miserable in himself, and the scorn of his neighbours. Do you not admire his courage?

Finally, idleness carries with it an evident and most hazardous exposure to moral mischiefs of the greatest and worst kinds.—In strictness of speech, we cannot be entirely inactive. Such is the constitution of our nature that we must be engaged and employed in some way or other. If we be not industrious in a laudable pursuit, it is pretty certain that we shall plunge into some sort of vice, some species of folly. Facts speak volumes upon this subject. How many wretched slaves of intemperance, debauchery, and the gaming table, may be observed, whose shameful and pernicious defections may infallibly be traced to idleness! The neglect of their incumbent labour or studies betrayed them to bad company, and bad company corrupted their morals. To escape the intolerable stagnation which results from indolence, they entered into the road which leads thousands to ruin, both here and hereafter. I think nothing more needs to be said for supporting the claim of the finished idler to heroism. For the simple sake of doing nothing, he becomes the pest and merits the abhorrence of society, and deliberately sacrifices his highest interests in this world and in the world to come.

And now to conclude, as they used to say in old times, with a word of application. Would you forfeit the pleasures of active life? Would you abandon the esteem of all those who are themselves estimable, as well as of your own mind? Would you fail of success in any useful or honourable business? Would you sport with your morals, your peace, and your eternal welfare? Are you ambitious to reach the sublime bravery which makes all these sacrifices, and rushes into all these incalculable perils? The way is open before your eyes. Be resolutely and perseveringly idle;

and the consequences will follow as certainly as any effect whatever proceeds from its natural cause.

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No. 12. JANUARY 27, 1814.

Religion the Basis of Good Education.

EVERY man who feels a serious concern for the welfare of his fellow creatures, and meditates much upon the means of promoting it, must find his thoughts strongly directed to the education of youth. I entreat my readers to consider attentively, and to appreciate according to their real value, whatever ideas I may offer them upon this important subject.

In the present paper I shall endeavour to settle a principle which I take to be of the utmost moment; namely, that of all good education religion is essentially the basis. It is not my design to turn these little essays into sermons; yet I dare not forget, while I am writing them, that I am a Christian: nor do I expect that any but those who reverence Christianity will take much interest in what I have to say. To educate man is to form his character so that he may be useful, exalted, and happy, in the highest possible degree. And in the methods of doing this, I well know how little communion of sentiment can exist between those who remember that we are accountable and immortal beings, and those who regard us as if we were animals only, somewhat better gifted than our neighbours the brutes, but doomed like them to sink into the dust, and lose ourselves forever.

Our Creator has implanted in our natural constitution the principles of reason, social attachment, and moral perception; together with capacities for sublime enjoyment, and a thirst for happiness never to be extinguished. So far are we sensible of all this, that we are very prone to boast of the dignity of our nature. But the history of our species affords the most melan-

choly demonstrations what a stupid, degraded, and miserable thing man is, when his faculties run their course without the aids of wise and assiduous culture. No man of common sense can doubt for a moment that some sort of training, some mode of education, is absolutely indispensable to our honour and our felicity.

In this world we have our parts to act, in taking care of ourselves, and in discharging a variety of good offices one to another. But this is our sojourn, not our home. Whatever may be our estimation of the objects about us, or our wishes respecting a permanent continuance among them, it is our inevitable destiny that we must leave them, to return no more. At some hour, to us altogether uncertain, only that we know it cannot in any case be very distant, we must bid adieu to all the connexions and possessions of the present life, and launch into the ocean of an eternal existence.

The Author of our being has not left us in utter ignorance about the condition in which we are to find ourselves in the unseen world. We have something far more sure than vague conjecture upon a subject so well calculated to arouse our anxious curiosity. We know that a fixed eternity of bliss or wo awaits every child of Adam. And we know also that it depends on our reconciliation to God, or remaining under his displeasure, and on the character which we carry with us out of this narrow scene of probation, whether our immortality shall prove to us a blessing or a curse too vast for any limited mind to conceive. How awful the alternative! The same infallible authority which tells us these things explains with abundant perspicuity how we may be accepted with God through faith in his beloved Son; and what is the character necessary to qualify us for heaven, with the way to its attainment. Our acceptance and our renovation invariably go together. And while the Father of our spirits reserves to himself the right of freely blotting out our transgressions, and the efficient agency of making

us holy as he is holy; or rather claims them as his incommunicable prerogatives; we are instructed as to the means with which he works, and in the use of which he requires us to be found. We are commanded to be diligent in the acquisition of scriptural knowledge, humble and unceasing in prayer to God for those good influences which he alone can bestow, strict in watching over our own deceitful hearts, and resolute in transferring our best affections from this world to the things which are above.

The inspired code of our religion does not permit us to conclude that the favour of God and the business of the world are to be coordinate, nor even entirely separate objects of our pursuit. As religion is to be our supreme concern, and to have its seasons of peculiar attention, so it is also to mingle its purifying spirit with all that we do. All our thoughts, desires, purposes, words, and actions, are to be governed by the law of God, and imbued with the tempers of piety and benevolence. Such is the sacred discipline appointed for us, in order that we may depart in peace at the call of the sovereign Master of life and death, and enter into that fulness of joy which is the portion of all who sincerely love and obey him. Experience proves, moreover, that not a moment can with safety be lost in the application of this discipline. It ought to be commenced with the first opening of our intellectual and active powers. Even from our early childhood, we are continually forming and strengthening those habits which constitute our characters, and fit us to meet the gracious approbation or the just anger of our omniscient Judge. We either trust in Christ Jesus as our Redeemer, and walk after his example, or we harden ourselves in rebellion and impenitency. There is no neutrality here. If the seeds of virtue be not sown, or do not take root, the soil in which they ought to flourish must incessantly become more wild and poisonous, more productive of the weeds of sin and misery.

If these views of the situation and prospects of man are correct, the inference is manifest, and not to be resisted, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" or, which is the same thing, that religion is the groundwork of all good education. Every scheme for the instruction and training of the young which is fabricated in contempt of religion, or carried on in the practical neglect of it, must be not only grossly defective, but chargeable with folly and cruelty which words cannot easily describe. And yet I fear that this folly and this cruelty, in a greater or less degree, are becoming extremely common amongst us. If so, we at once detect the cause of that abounding licentiousness, both of sentiment and action, which makes the pious man tremble for the fate of his country.

In applying my principle to the details of education, I am aware that I may bring upon myself the name of a visionary theorist, and the charge of requiring what circumstances render impracticable. But truth and duty must be exhibited without disguise. If I can impress upon the heart of a single parent, or teacher of the rising generation, a deeper sense than he now has of what is desirable and obligatory in this great affair, my zealous suggestions will not have been offered in vain. And I doubt not that in proportion as our practice approximates to the standard of wisdom and righteousness, we shall have occasion to rejoice in the happy consequences which will not fail to appear.

No. 13. FEBRUARY 3, 1814.

The Honest Debtor.

IT was my privilege to have a sober, industrious, honest father. Without any extraordinary genius or extensive reading, he possessed a good deal of that useful kind of sense called common sense. While I

was growing up, he gave me, from my very childhood, his advice for the regulation of my conduct; and as I had no small respect for his understanding, and knew that he could aim at nothing by his exhortations but my good, they made an indelible impression upon my memory. The following were his rules, with his illustrations of them, upon the subject of going into debt and getting out of it. I lay them before my readers because I have found them highly beneficial to myself.

Beware of bringing yourself into debt for things which you do not really need, merely because they may strike your fancy, and your credit may be good.—To buy on credit exposes you to two dangers. One is that you are almost sure to buy at the highest price. Cash commands a better bargain than any credit, all the world over. The other danger is that your credit itself is likely to suffer some diminution, when people see you availing yourself of it very freely. To incur these evils for mere superfluities is certainly a most unwise policy.

Do not go into debt without a reasonable prospect of being able to make punctual payment.—The life of commerce is punctuality; credit and mutual confidence must sink without it. Unfavourable events, indeed, may occur, which human foresight could not calculate; and all men of sense and candour will make the proper allowance for them when they do. But to run into your neighbour's books heedlessly is a practice which no prevalence of it can save from the charge of folly. By failing in this way to pay a dollar at the appointed hour, you may lose the accommodation of hundreds. Besides, it is downright dishonesty to make promises thus at random, and to sport with your neighbour's confidence. How can he be deemed an upright or honourable man who, to answer his present ends, gives me his word or his bond to do a thing, when he has taken no care to know whether he shall be able to do it or not?

If you have incurred a debt, use exertion and self-denial in order that you may be prepared for payment.—It is a shame that the inculcation of this rule is necessary; but necessary it is, on account of the currency of an opposite sentiment and practice. Debtors often rush into new and hazardous adventures, or live in unabated luxury and extravagance, while the day of payment approaches. When it comes, and finds them unprepared to comply with their engagements, they unblushingly try to excuse themselves by pleading that they have not the money. Surely this mode of thinking and acting cannot be reconciled with a nice sense of justice. One may well say to such a man, what right had you to be playing with the means of satisfying your creditor's claim, and with that good faith which binds society together? It is as manifestly your duty to take all reasonable pains that you may be ready to pay your debt, as it is to pay it when you are ready.

Let not resentment arise in your bosom because your creditor asks payment of you.—Is it injurious in him to demand that which is rightfully his own? Did you not authorize him to expect he should receive it? And dare you talk of being offended because he requires you to fulfil your obligation, and be as good as your word? But you will perhaps say, he ought not to pester me with his demands, since he knows I would pay him, were I able. I answer, it may be that he does not know this, and has no sufficient means of knowing it. Perhaps he does know that you have not used the requisite diligence and economy that you might be able to discharge the debt. But let us suppose that you are clear of these imputations; that you have gone to your creditor, as it was your duty to do, and proved to him that your not being ready to make payment arises from no fault of your own; still his necessities may put it out of his power to grant the indulgence which you crave, and which, in better circumstances, he might willingly afford you. It is

enough to kindle the indignation of an honest man to contemplate a scene which is not seldom realized; a creditor asking his just due with a low, submissive voice, and in terms of studied mildness, while the debtor reddens with anger, and complains of unkind and ungentlemanly treatment! At any rate, it is foolish to get into a passion even with a harsh, unreasonable dun. The use which you should make of his troublesome importunity is to get out of his clutches as soon as you can, and beware never to fall into them again.

Such were my worthy father's maxims upon this subject. And as he was a disciple of the old school in morals, he loved dearly to enforce his rules by the authority of the bible. He frequently observed to me that the bible not only enjoins every duty of life, but does it in an impressive manner peculiar to itself. For instance; "owe no man any thing, but to love one another." A Christian should feel it as a burden to be in debt, and should make it a serious business to discharge every pecuniary claim which may lie upon him. With this precept is sweetly introduced the sentiment, worthy of the great apostle, and exquisitely suited to warm and expand the generous heart, that our obligations to reciprocal love and kindness can never be canceled. As we are all descendants of one father, involved in common weaknesses, difficulties, and afflictions; sustaining the same arduous probation, and traveling to the same eternity; no time, no circumstances, can ever dissolve the ties which bind us to mutual sympathy and benevolence. My neighbour may have no bond of mine for money, nor I of his. But it is required of us that we permit not our brotherly love to slumber; that we always study and exert ourselves to promote each other's good. O to see such a spirit universally diffused! Thanks be to God, the gospel is making a glorious progress over the earth, and carrying this heavenly spirit in its train to all her regions.

No. 14. February 17, 1814.

On a Taste for Reading.

TO a man who loves books as he loves his daily bread, it must be painful to observe how low the taste for reading stands in our country. It is said, I hope truly, that we read more than our forefathers did an age or two ago; but we certainly still fall short in our propensities this way, far short of what is practicable and much to be desired.

I am not going to make a laboured essay on the advantages of reading; but I cannot let the subject pass without a few remarks. As rational beings, we ought to read for the cultivation and enlargement of our minds. Is not the mind our noblest and most important part? Is it not then a shameful thing to neglect it, and lay out all our care in feeding and decorating the body? As Christians, we are bound to read, that we may improve ourselves in the best kind of knowledge. The bible is so admirably constructed as to make the weakest sincere inquirer wise to salvation; and at the same time to afford interesting and edifying instruction to the ablest one through the whole course of life. As American citizens, we ought doubtless to be a reading, thinking people. We choose our own rulers; and they must in various ways be influenced by our sentiments, and even by our passions. Instead, then, of reading nothing, or confining ourselves to the newspaper effusions of angry political disputants, it becomes us to acquire, by extensive investigation, a proper acquaintance with our own nature, and the modes in which our passions operate. Of all people, I think republicans ought to be the most diligent students of history; that they may discern those perilous rocks and shoals on which the bark of liberty has been so often wrecked. In addition to all this, I observe that a strong taste for reading is a source of enjoyment with which few others can bear to be compared. Its pleasures, provided we select our matter

rightly, are pure, elevated, and durable; and can only be exceeded in value by those of devotion and the interchange of kind affections.

But many will agree with me in the general importance of a habit of reading, who nevertheless read little or nothing. My chief object in this paper is to canvass their pretexts and excuses.

It is pleaded by some, with too much cause, that they have no relish for reading; and that a book, instead of interesting them powerfully, rather disposes them to drowsiness. When these things are said by persons who have arrived at the middle of life, or advanced beyond it, the disease of their minds, (for so I must call it,) is scarcely curable. The taste must be acquired by practice; and the practice ought to be begun in the days of youth. Afterwards it is commonly too late. I entreat parents, even those who have no delight in reading, to take pains in training their children to delight in it. And here I cannot help saying I do not at all wonder that so many young people grow up without any considerable inclination to reading, when I find so little care employed to furnish them engaging books. How could any other effect be looked for? You go to the corner of the house,—I always give my earliest inquisition to it,—which purports to contain the library. In the room of works adapted by their vigour of thought and beauty of style to excite and to gratify curiosity, and embracing such a variety of subjects as to allure the flagging attention, you see only a few old, tattered volumes, handed down through two or three generations, as dull in their matter as they are disgusting in their manner. You lay your hand upon some starched, antiquated book on religion; and after a little inspection, you wonder how such a book could possibly be read, even three ages ago. Your eye meets pages which wear a seeming as if they were intended for poetry, but which have not one lineament of genuine poetry about them. You find some scrap called a history; but presently

ascertain it to be a mere chronicle of facts, as dry and empty as the shells of birds' eggs strung upon a thread, but without any of their prettiness. You exhort the owner of this scanty, hereditary lumber to dedicate some of his abounding dollars to the purchase of new and well chosen books. He hears you with entire coolness, and then answers, with an air of compassion on you for your simplicity, that he has books enough, more indeed than he reads. As to his children, he wishes them to make a good use of the books they have, before they tease him for fresh ones. Thus things go on in many a family. The less the old, ragged books are read, the longer they will last, and serve to shut mental improvement and polish out of doors.

Some plead that they have little or no time for reading. Well, I know that mankind are placed in various situations, and I do not mean to urge impossibilities. What I wish to see is a careful redemption of time for reading, as well as for other useful and laudable purposes. Would to God that we all seriously considered how much time we waste in unnecessary and even pernicious relaxation. Fifteen minutes spent on the pages of a good book may produce some sensible pleasure and profit, nay, even a high degree of both. Yet among those who do not give fifteen minutes once in a week to reading, and assign the want of time as their excuse, you may observe many who squander hours in needless sleep, idle visits, frivolous or mischievous conversation, and dissipating amusements. What would you think on hearing a farmer say that he lacked time for repairing his prostrate fences, and destroying the weeds and briers which were devouring his fields, while you saw him busily engaged in hunting butterflies? The same must we think of one who throws away precious time in folly and trifling, and yet pretends to have no leisure for the improvement of the mind.

People sometimes say they would willingly purchase valuable books, did they but know how to dis-

distinguish them from the mass of trash with which they are mingled in the literary market. I know that this want of skill is a frequent and a serious evil; and I know also that, besides the expense of money and time, it is worse to read a bad or a foolish book than to read none. But the remedy for the evil is not difficult to be found. Go to some friend in whose correctness of principle and maturity of knowledge you can place confidence, and get the assistance which you need in selecting books of sterling merit.

The last plea which I shall notice is the high price of books, reenforced with the scarcity of money. Now money is always said to be scarce by those who are not willing to part from it. I do not remember a time when this same complaint was not repeated by many. Books have, indeed, risen greatly in price within a few years; yet I believe they are as easy to be procured now as they formerly were. However, I admit that there are many worthy people who have but little money to spare for this sort of property. In this view, a social or neighbourhood library is of great importance. Obvious as the thing is, perhaps some of my readers have never thought of it, that twenty families, for an expenditure of ten dollars each, may have the benefit of two hundred dollars' worth of literature. But as such a scheme frequently cannot be accomplished, I observe farther that, costly as books are, it requires no enormous sum of money to obtain an excellent library. Only let the heart be set upon the object; and let care be taken to buy none but books of the highest value for their matter and composition. As to the gaudy external decorations of a book, which go far to swell the price, I suppose a judicious mind must think as little of them as of fanciful extravagance in dress or furniture. I take the liberty of recommending to every young couple, when they set up housekeeping, whether they be rich or poor, to consider a good collection of books as one of the necessaries of life. It is, indeed, not only a ne-

cessary, but also a luxury, in the best sense of the word. Let it be made a principle that books are wanted, even as other things are wanted, in order to comfortable and pleasant living. And let efforts be made that something may still be added successively, in the progress of time, to the stock of nourishment for the mind.

Could I prevail with my fellow citizens to adopt the sentiments which I have offered on this subject, I feel confident that they would very generally find it practicable to get good books to read, and time for reading them; and that the following of my advice would produce much advantage to their morals, and greatly increase the happiness of their lives.

No. 15. March 3, 1814.

On Reading with Attention.

Mr. Mountaineer,

I have seen the observations on a taste for reading contained in your last number, and give them my hearty approbation. Indeed I have long been convinced of the importance of such a taste and habit as you recommend. But I experience a difficulty in my own case, which I am desirous to conquer, and which you have not touched. I will state it to you. My circumstances in life have obliged me, and do still, to be much occupied with business. However, as it has pleased God to prosper my affairs, and to preserve me from vicious courses, I could easily afford many an hour to reading. But my trouble is that I cannot confine my mind to what I read. I take up a book, and begin to peruse it; but for the most part, while my eyes are poring on the page, my thoughts are wandering away from the subject to some of the various pursuits on which the support and education of my family depend. After going on at this rate for a time, I discover the divided state of my attention, and lay

down the book with the melancholy impression that it has yielded me neither pleasure nor benefit. I feel and lament this as a mental disease, and have no objection to your calling it so. Can you give me any assistance in accomplishing its cure? Favour me with your prescriptions, and oblige your friend,

SAMUEL SOBER.

I frankly own that the case presented to me in the foregoing letter is a hard one. The evil of which my friend Sober complains is one with which I have to contend at times to this day, though reading has been with me a chosen and almost perpetual employment through life. For the removal of this sore disturbance, I will offer the best advice in my power.

Take care to get books truly excellent. Perhaps the reason why your attention rambles is that you are delving at some of those dull, insipid, confused productions, whether old or new, with which it would be a misfortune to be pleased; and which their authors, however good their aims might be, never had a legitimate title to publish. There is a vast difference in books. Permit me to name to you a few of the best. Do you want to read on religion? Try the writings of *Doddridge*, *Witherspoon*, *Davies*, *Wilberforce*, and *Hannah More*. Is history your object? Apply yourself to *Rollin*, *Mosheim*, *Robertson*, and *Marshall*. Have you a taste for literary biography? Turn to *the Lives of the Poets*, *by Dr. Johnson*, and *the Life of Johnson* himself, *by Boswell*. Have you a disposition to read poetry? Go to the mighty masters; to *Milton*, *Young*, *Thomson*, *Cowper*, and *Campbell*. And unless you are too old to acquire a perception of high poetic excellence in a new style, read the brilliant effusions of *Walter Scott*. Do you wish to have reading which combines amusement and utility, and to which small remnants of time may be devoted? Resort to *the Spectator*, *the Guardian*, *the Rambler*, *the Idler*, *the Adventurer*, *the British Spy*, *the Old*

Bachelor; and other works of that class, written upon such a miscellaneous plan as the Mountaineer, but with abilities seventy fold greater.

In the next place, exert your most vigorous efforts, and persevere in them, to subdue the waywardness of your mind. Perhaps you despair of the victory, and give over too soon. Fixed habits are not likely to be changed at once; and the acquisition of a decisive taste for reading is richly worth a great deal of labour.

I must have your leave to suggest also that possibly you are more anxious than you ought to be about the amassing of riches. Examine this matter, I pray you, with the strictness which it deserves. Is it necessary, or right, that you rack your mind with vexation, and leave it neglected in ignorance, that you may die rich, or give large, dangerous fortunes, while you live, to your children? I venture to say, it is not. If, then, you have so many harassing trains of business on hand that you cannot read to advantage, nor even sleep soundly, it should be your first study and endeavour to lay some of them aside.

These directions, I hope, will have a degree of efficacy. Still I am sensible that the government of the thoughts is an unusually difficult task. I cannot close my prescriptions on the case proposed, without recommending to those who are burdened with its perplexities the asking of help from above. Some may call this enthusiasm; but I am not ashamed of the sentiment. Let no one understand me as countenancing any kind of reading but such as becomes a rational being and a Christian; such as you can justify before God, and consistently request him to render useful to you by his blessing. Go, then, to the throne of grace, and implore the Maker of your spirit to give you such a command of your faculties that you may grow daily in knowledge and wisdom; to the end that you may be the better qualified for his service in this world, and for participating in the sublime pursuits and enjoyments of that which is to come.

No. 16. March 24, 1814.

The Plain Farmer's Library.

Mr. Mountaineer,

I have found pleasure in looking over your speculations, and think they are calculated to do good. In perusing your fourteenth number, which recommends reading, I felt the want of ability to make a proper choice of books. The difficulty, to one who has not a general acquaintance with literature, is the not knowing what books would be most useful to those who can devote to them only small portions of time. You direct us to apply to some friend in whom we can place confidence, and get the assistance we need. Others will do as they judge best; but for my own part, I should be glad if you would give us a selection for a moderate library, with a particular regard to the ease of the plain farmer.

C. One of your Readers.

I receive this request with unfeigned satisfaction. Very lately I have pointed out some books of prime merit; but it was done in a manner too cursory to be referred to as an execution of the task now set me; a task than which none could be more agreeable. The following titles and remarks are at the service of my correspondent. While I offer them, however, I cannot much flatter myself that my favourable opinion of any book will increase its estimation in the minds of those to whom it is already known.

As I am left at large with regard to subjects, I shall begin with that which is undoubtedly of supreme importance to all mankind; I mean religion.

In support of the truth of Christianity in general, we have many excellent treatises. I shall only mention two small ones; namely, *Beattie's Evidences of the Christian Religion*, and *Soame Jenyns' View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*. Well may I prize them at no common rate, as they

were once the means of drawing me back from the very brink of infidelity.

Scott's Family Bible is a rich treasure indeed, the work of a pious, judicious, and indefatigable interpreter of the book of God. I take it to be a sound principle that we should seek the explanation of scripture by resorting chiefly to the scripture itself; and for this purpose commentators and others have given us marginal references. Scott's are far the best that I have ever examined.

The same author has published *Essays on the most Important Subjects in Religion*, a volume replete with instruction. His *Force of Truth*, a little piece in which he relates, with much simplicity, the progress of his own mind in the investigation of the Christian doctrines, is an exceedingly interesting narrative.

Doddridge's Family Expositor on the New Testament is my favourite among scriptural commentaries. Its characteristics are elegance, learning, candour, and affectionate piety; and the work is adapted to be useful at once to the plain man and to the scholar.

Guyse's Paraphrase on the New Testament has also much of my esteem, for its correctness of exposition, and for the very serious spirit which marks every page. It is an unornamented, practical work, without being in any respect a superficial one.

Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul I have long accounted the best book that I knew, next to the volume of divine revelation, for general usefulness. Indeed I cannot find words fully to express my sense of its value. A very suitable companion for it will be found in the same writer's *Discourses on Regeneration*.

Edwards' Treatise on Religious Affections is a work of the first order, and should be carefully studied by all Christians. The *Sermons* of this great and good man claim an equal degree of attention.

The *Works of Dr. Witherspoon* have solid merit. They consist chiefly of sermons and religious essays,

full of wisdom, and written in a most perspicuous and nervous style. Some of the Doctor's pieces have a vein of satire in them, which is well directed and exquisitely entertaining.

Of *Dr. John Owen's* books, *on Indwelling Sin*, and *on Spiritual Mindedness*, I acknowledge that the style is rather harsh and antiquated. This is to me some diminution of their attractions, as I love a good style dearly. Yet the rare penetration, wisdom, and piety displayed in these two volumes induce me to recommend them earnestly to every man who wishes to gain that all-important kind of science, an intimate acquaintance with his own heart.

Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, and his *Saint's Everlasting Rest, abridged by Fawcett*, are things of superlative value; strong in thought, and almost without a parallel in fervour of spirit.

Wilberforce's View of Christianity is a practical work far beyond the ordinary level of excellence. That a layman, a gentleman of distinction in the British house of commons, has written a book of such glowing piety, is a most pleasing occurrence. I should pity the state of that man's heart who could rise without strong impressions from the reading of this very eloquent performance.

Berridge's Christian World Unmasked exhibits the religion of the humble disciple of Christ in a very clear and striking way. The author indulges a certain odd humour in his manner, which amuses me not a little, even while I doubt whether it can be entirely justified.

I may as well introduce here as any where else *the Pilgrim's Progress*, and *the Holy War, by John Bunyan*. They are evangelical allegories, the productions of a wonderful genius. The critics, perhaps, will tell me, with a sneer, that John was a poor mechanic, that he had no literature, and that he has written in a homely, oldfashioned style. I answer, he instructs me, he captivates me, he melts my heart, he

makes me weep for joy, the purest and sweetest joy that visits man in the present world. These allegorical stories enraptured me in my childhood; and I love them still as much as I ever did. One of the most delicious days of my life was spent in reading the Holy War.

Watts' World to Come is a volume of sermons which ought not to be forgotten. There is much beauty in Dr. Watts' manner of writing; and these sermons have an energy and solemnity not often equaled.

The *Works of the Rev. John Newton* have been much read and esteemed by those who adhere to the unadulterated gospel of Christ. His two volumes of religious letters, entitled *Cardiphonia*, are singularly excellent.

The *Sermons of the Rev. Samuel Davies* have a very extensive circulation; yet not so extensive, I think, as they deserve. They carry the impress of talents and zeal of the most exalted grade. When I read Davies, I can hardly conceive of him as seated in his study writing a discourse. I seem to behold his majestic form in the pulpit; his manly countenance kindled with ardour in the cause of God, or bathed in tears of compassion for perishing sinners; his lips pouring forth a torrent of sacred eloquence which bears down all opposition. Upon the whole, Davies' sermons are, in my judgment, the best that I have ever read.

Burder's Village Sermons are short, plain, and impressive. They ought to have a place in every family.

Doddridge's Life of Col. Gardiner, and *the Life of Dr. Doddridge by Mr. Orton*, may be sought for, as pieces of Christian biography highly engaging and instructive.

Perhaps I have named religious books enough for the purpose in view; though it would be easy to add to the catalogue many others of similar value. I wish to mention some good works on other subjects, but find that I must defer it to a future opportunity.

No. 17. March 31, 1814.

The Plain Farmer's Library, Continued.

IN proceeding with the business of my last paper, I deem it right, on reflection, to recommend two or three books more in the religious department.

He who desires to study his bible to advantage ought to have a *Concordance*, that he may readily find any text which he wants to see. *Cruden's* is the best; and I have no idea of its being possible that a better one should ever be made. But as few can bear the expense of purchasing so large a work of this sort, *Butterworth's* may be mentioned, as much cheaper, and yet valuable.

Buck's Theological Dictionary is a good collection. It contains much curious and useful information, not easy to be obtained from works of any other kind.

In ecclesiastical history, so interesting a branch of knowledge to the Christian and the philosopher, *Mosheim* is the great standard author. But I think *Milner's Church History* preferable for general use, and especially for plain readers. It is a work of extensive research, written in the very spirit of the gospel, and may emphatically be called the history of pure Christianity.

It seems desirable that every man possess a good *System of Geography*. I suppose *Dr. Morse's* is the best, as being more full and accurate than others in regard to our own country. It may be procured either with an *Atlas*, or with a few maps inserted in the volumes. *Morse's Abridgement of his Geography* is probably as good as any book upon the subject of so small a size.

Well written civil history is both a pleasant and instructive part of literature. But here the mass of matter is so vastly large that it is not easy to select a moderate quantity. I wish I could begin by naming a good history of our own state. It mortifies me to be obliged to say that nothing yet exists deserving such a

title. We have to gather the story of Virginia as we can, from various quarters. With this view, the best thing to be consulted is the introductory volume of *Marshall's Life of Washington.*

The history of the American revolution has been written by many hands; and with the leading principles and facts involved in that important event no citizen of our country should rest unacquainted. On this theme, so deeply affecting to every heart that loves our national independence and liberty, *Marshall's Life of Washington*, just now mentioned, is the most perfect work to which attention can be invited. But it is formidably voluminous and costly. *Gordon's History of our Revolution* may be recommended as very faithful and satisfactory. I will add, under this head, that I am one of the multitude who are pleased with *Weems' Life of Washington.* It wants dignity indeed; but draws the reader along by the influence of lively, playful, and sometimes very touching description. It has been to me an agreeable surprise to find so much matter, delivered in so taking a manner, in the compass of one small volume.

Rollin's Ancient History is placed by general consent in the foremost rank of merit. The author was not only a classical scholar, but a man of eminent piety and virtue; and is always careful to illustrate divine providence and the prophecies of the bible by the historical facts which he relates.

Dr. Robertson is a historian of very high standing. His *Histories of Scotland, Charles the Fifth*, and *America*, are among the most finished models in this species of writing.—And here I am reminded that it will be well for me if I escape the charge of egregious presumption, while I seem to think of adding any thing, by my humble testimony, to the credit of the great authors whom I am naming in these papers. But let any one who may be disposed thus to censure me remember that I am only giving my opinion of books to those whom I apprehend to be hitherto des-

titute of acquaintance with them; which I am convinced is the case with a large number of the good people of our valley.

Hume's History of England delights me, as it must delight every man who loves the works of genius. Its merits are of a superior order, both in the selection of the matter, and in the style and spirit of the composition. But it has also moral defects of no common magnitude. The reader should be continually and strictly on his guard against the infidelity which tinges the narrative of this able historian. For though he does not directly attack the bible, nor pronounce the Christian religion to be an imposture, his volumes abound with sarcastic, venomous insinuations against evangelical truth and piety.

Upon books of travels I must not expatiate, as I feel a strong temptation to do. For me, as for others who wish to know something more than what passes at their own firesides, this roaming over the world by proxy has very powerful attractions. I will barely set down, as recent and interesting works of this character, *Park's Travels in Africa*, *Barrow's Travels in China*, and *the Expedition of Captains Lewis and Clarke to the Pacific Ocean*. These journies were performed in regions previously almost or altogether unknown to us; and by men fully competent to afford to our curiosity a luxurious feast of gratification.

I have been for some time longing to bring forward and to praise my favourite poets. But how shall I proceed? Most of the excellent poetry which I have read is in blank verse; and I know many a worthy man and amiable woman, persons of some reading too, who are not gifted with a taste for any poetry that lacks the jingle of rhyme. Yet there are others, even among the plain farmers, endowed with a high capacity for poetic enjoyments. I will, therefore, go on.

Milton is a prince among the poets. I must honestly avow that if it be called a literary heresy to prefer Milton to the far-famed ancients, Homer, Vir-

gil, and the rest, I must bear the name of heretic while I live. Nor do I mean to confine my praise to his *Paradise Lost*. His *Comus*, and *Sampson Agonistes*, as well as several of his smaller poems, could only have been written by the author of Paradise Lost: nor is his *Paradise Regained* unworthy of him, though it has sometimes been so represented.

Young's Night Thoughts,—where shall I find language to do justice to a volume so overflowing in sentiment, so energetic in impression? This mighty genius astonishes and transports me by his luminous displays of religious and moral truth. I may add that Dr. Young's *Love of Fame* is the most pungent and instructive work of the satirical class that has ever fallen under my inspection.

Blair's Grave is a small poem, but not small in value. The renown of Young would have been increased rather than diminished by having written the Grave.

If you do not read *Cowper's Task*, you are losing more pleasure and improvement than I know how to describe. But though I have named the Task, as esteeming it the best of Cowper's *Works*, I do not think slightly of the rest. I earnestly recommend all the productions of "that truly Christian poet."

Thomson's Seasons will be read and admired so long as the heart of man shall sympathize with benevolent affections, and rejoice in tracing nature through her varieties of grandeur and beauty.

The *Poetical Works of Campbell* are elegant and pathetic in a high degree, and support his claim to a place among the immortal bards already mentioned.

Montgomery too, of whom I am never weary, is enrolled with the genuine sons of song. His lines breathe a spirit of piety and of tenderness, which raises him far above the swarming verse-builders of the age.

Bloomfield, the author of *the Farmer's Boy*, is the very poet of the country. I love to travel with him back to the simple scenes and employments of my

early days; to wander in fancy through the fields and woods surrounding my native spot; charmed for the time into a sweet oblivion of all the restless cares, anxieties, and disappointments of maturer life.

I should feel myself inexcusable, were I to close my catalogue before I had rendered my best tribute of approbation to *Coelebs in Search of a Wife.* Frequently has that delightful work occurred to my thoughts; but I hesitated about the division of our library in which it should be arranged. Why did I not at once give it a station among my choicest books on religion?

No. 18. April 21, 1814.

The Good Teacher.

WHAT sort of man ought the teacher of an English school to be? Many, I am afraid, would satisfy themselves with answering, he must be a man who can teach our children to read and write, and to cypher as far as the rule of three; and who will do it at the price of five or six dollars a year for each scholar. As I do not like this meager account, I must be permitted to offer, if I can, a better one of my own.

The teacher should be a man of piety. Is religion a matter of infinite importance? Do you wish your children to imbibe the pure spirit of the gospel from their tenderest years; and are you daily taking measures to train them up in Christian sentiments and feelings? Is it not desirable, then, that their teacher aid you in this work, and from the fulness of his own devout heart drop heavenly instruction upon the ductile minds of his pupils? But if you cannot obtain a pious man, I insist upon your choosing one who possesses a serious respect for religion, abhors all scoffing at sacred things, and is unexceptionable in his moral conduct. Children have a keener discernment of character than we are apt to imagine. And how can they love a man who swears profanely, or be-

comes intoxicated, or breaks the sabbath, or is seen to be the sport of his angry passions? If they do love him, so much the worse; they are likely to imitate his bad example. Few things so monstrous and shocking can be conceived as the committing of your little ones to the hands of a wretch who lives in open defiance of the laws and threatenings of his Maker.

The teacher must be a man of industry. There are not many occupations in life where activity and constant attention are so imperiously requisite as in the conducting of a school, or where laziness is so great a crime. In a community of this sort, play and mischief will be sure to usurp the place of learning, if the master be a dozing, listless drone.

He must also be strict and impartial in the exercise of discipline; maintaining in himself a steady calmness of temper, which nothing shall be able to ruffle; governing those intrusted to his care like a father, with mingled authority and love.

The teacher ought to be an accomplished scholar, not a mere smatterer, in the parts of knowledge which he undertakes to communicate. There is, here and there, a poor neighbourhood, which has to accept more humble qualifications, for the sake of cheapness. And I readily admit the propriety of doing so; as it is better that children be taught imperfectly than that they grow up in utter ignorance. But away with the mean spirit of parsimony and grudging, when you are seeking a man to cultivate the minds of your precious offspring. Let me descend to some particulars.

I require my teacher to be an adept in spelling, and to love good spelling. I cannot understand how a well trained mind can be indifferent upon this article. And I have no doubt that most of the bad spelling which abounds so much may be attributed to the incapacity or the negligence of teachers.

I want my teacher to pronounce the words of our language according to the standard, and assiduously to inculcate a good pronunciation. Shall I still be

told that my zeal in this affair is misapplied, and that it is immaterial how we pronounce, if people only get the signification of what we say? The point has been settled in a former number; and until you can prove good taste to be universally an unmeaning phrase, I shall persist in the assertion that it does strongly apply to the right pronunciation of our language.

The teacher must read well; that is, in a free, natural manner, with proper distinctness, emphasis, pauses, and cadence; of all which ingredients the best models are furnished by animated conversation. To read perfectly is a great and lovely art, as rare, I fear, as that of perfect speaking. There must have been a prevailing and shameful remissness in the duty of teaching children to read. The drawling, monotonous, sing-song way, which we meet with so frequently, is much to be pitied, and much to be lamented. May the essays of my pen never undergo this murdering process!

I require, farther, that my teacher be thoroughly skilled in grammar. It is possible, I believe, for a fine genius to learn grammar insensibly, by reading many of the best authors. But it is only a few who have such genius; and fewer still can go through such a course of reading, especially while they are young. If you want your children to express themselves with correctness, whether by speech or on paper, they must commit the rules of grammar to memory, and form, by practice at school, the habit of applying them in all cases with facility.

Can I excuse the want of a good writing hand in the teacher? I think not. To be sure, one may buy more finished copies in the stores than any penman can write. But besides the expense of this, it disgraces a teacher to be able only to scrawl such miserable pothooks as disgust the eye of every beholder: and I have never seen children take much care to write handsomely, when they knew that their instructor could not afford them a respectable pattern for imitation.

Arithmetic comprises a wide range of useful and curious knowledge. I wish my teacher to be well versed in it. And I expect him to be not merely a mechanical operator; but to know, like a man of science, the reasons on which his rules are founded; and to be capable of making his pupils, if their intellectual powers be sufficient, rational as well as expert arithmeticians.

Here is my picture of a good and worthy teacher. May it help to raise the dignity and value of the profession! If you can enlist in your service such a man as I have described, consider him as a very important acquisition; and treat him, as he justly deserves to be treated, with esteem and liberality.

This may be as suitable a place as any other for the insertion of the following note.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

I request you, as a friend to accuracy of language, to correct the following common errors. People say, *the Testament*, meaning *the New Testament*. As we have *the Old and New Testaments*, the word Testament alone cannot with propriety be used to designate either of them. Again, we frequently hear persons speak of *the Bible and Testament*; intending to point out by these names *the Old Testament and the New*. Here is the error before mentioned, and another added to it. *The Old Testament* is not *the Bible*, according to the faith of Christians. Our bible includes both the testaments.

M.

No. 19. MAY 5, 1814.

Vice and Dissipation Reproved.

A CORRESPONDENT has favoured me with the following serious paper; and I lay it, without hesitation, before my readers. We live at a time and in circum-

stances which render such reflections and admonitions peculiarly seasonable.

FOR THE MOUNTAINEER.

"Enjoy the day of mirth, but know
There is a day of judgment too."

The life of man is short and uncertain. And as we see that we must die, so we also know assuredly that we must stand before our Creator in judgment. There we have to account for the use we make of our time and our faculties, and to abide the results of that solemn and impartial scrutiny.

Let us retire from the cares and pleasures of the world, and reflect calmly on the high end which God had in view when he gave us existence and placed us here. We shall soon find that the way in which the greater part of the children of men spend their time is totally hostile to the will of the Almighty, and utterly incompatible with their own happiness. Gross thoughtlessness characterizes vast numbers of mankind; and from this source flows a stream of evils injurious to society, and inconceivably detrimental to the individual. While we are immersed in the enjoyment of all those gratifications and delights which the earth affords, why do we not recollect that it will be asked of us on some future day, in a voice of thunder, did you make the providential blessings conferred upon you subservient to the grand purposes for which you were formed; or were they abused by you, to the dishonour of the great Giver, and to your own shame?

This world was not intended to be the scene of that wild gaiety which is so abundantly exhibited in our social circles. There is an extreme incongruity in the giddy mirth of those who are unreconciled to God. Did they employ a few moments in sober consideration, they must be aware that nothing stands between them and the awful bar of their final Judge but his long-suffering permission that they continue to draw

their forfeited breath. Did they thus consider, they must know that they have no certainty of the extension of that breath a single hour; and that such conduct as theirs has no tendency to prepare them for a state of perfect holiness in the heavens.

How shortlived are those guilty pleasures into which many so eagerly plunge themselves! What vanity is stamped upon them, and with what bitter annoyances are they attended! What mirth do you find in the tormenting uneasiness and corrosion which hover around the gaming table; in the empty purse and ruined fortune; in the sight of a neglected, injured wife, and a beggared family; in the pressing wants of such near and dear relatives, who are unable to provide for themselves? What resemblance to mirth do you perceive in the sickness and pain which follow the midnight revel; or in the haunting ghost of time dissipated in vile debauchery, of which the light of day even makes you blush to think? Can such things as these be accounted pleasures fit for a rational creature? Say, were the faculties of the soul bestowed for no other purpose than to be thus debased? It is impossible.

Look forward, and survey the end of your doings. These practices may wear a pleasant face to you so long as your infatuation continues; but there is a day of judgment coming, which will place them in a very different point of light. Now your sight is dim; you discern nothing with clearness. Your eyes you have madly covered with a film of prejudice, which prevents your seeing objects as they really are. You look, but you are deceived; you observe, but you have a confused and delusive notion of passing occurrences; and the end will be disappointment and despair. When death shall have disrobed you of your mortal clothes, and divested you of that phrensy which bewilders you here, every disguise shall be removed. Conscience shall have its full power restored. You shall behold things in their genuine characters; know the true value of all earthly enjoyments; and be compelled to

estimate, with agonies of remorse, the worth of that prize which you have slighted and forever lost.

We do not contemplate the world as we ought, until we recognise it as the theatre of our moral probation; the temporary residence of mankind, where we are required to secure, through the gospel of Jesus Christ, our welfare in that eternity which is appointed for all men living. Happiness and misery, both inexpressibly great, and both everlasting, are set before the human race. And can there be an inquiry more important to any one of us than this, which of these shall be my portion? Imagine the last trumpet sounding to awake the dead; see the earth shaking, the elements in commotion, and our globe, with all that is on it, burning in one promiscuous flame; and say at what price you rate your splendid possessions while they are consuming in the fire of the last day, and evaporating into smoke. O for the wisdom which lays up a sure and durable treasure in heaven! Dying without this wisdom and this treasure, it were good for us that we had never been born. While, therefore, we thankfully enjoy the comforts granted by the providence of God, let us beware of overwhelming ourselves with the pomps and luxuries of this vain world. Let us not forget that the hour is near, and may be very near, when we shall "say to corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and sister;" the hour when we shall enter into paradise or into hell, as our unchangeable abode.

C.

No. 20. MAY 19, 1814.

The Death of Emily.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

TWO years ago you witnessed my marriage. You saw Emily Wilson standing at my side in all the

bloom of youth and beauty, and heard us, in the presence of God, exchange our vows of love. Even in that hour of my soul's triumph, I felt my joy augmented by your cordial congratulations. Now, I must claim your sympathy in my sorrows. My Emily is gone,—gone to join her kindred angels in the land of bliss. Her mortal part was yesterday committed to the dust; and the world looks like a wilderness around me, in which I seem to wander alone. But you know how to feel with me and for me. You have seen the chosen partner of your heart snatched away to the grave, about the very time when you expected to rejoice in calling her all your own. Yet allow me to say that your distress could not be equal to mine. Fervently as you loved the excellent Julia, she would have become dearer, much dearer to you, had your union been permitted.

My Emily's fatal illness was a rapid consumption, originating in a visit to a poor, sick neighbour, in a season of most inclement weather. She was previously aware of the danger of going out at such a time, but would not let the danger check her benevolence. She soon felt seriously disordered, and our skilful friend Dr. Welford was brought to her aid. A little observation of her case led him to the conclusion, which he intimated to me, that no medical exertions, nothing short of a miracle, could save her life. With all my confidence in his judgment, I laboured to think him in this instance mistaken. O my friend, how poignant were my sufferings, under the alternation of diminishing hopes and increasing fears, during a period of three months! Emily foresaw the event long before I admitted the idea of its certainty. Besides the severe pain which she endured from her disease, her heart was torn also with anxious and opposite feelings. By death itself she was not terrified; and in looking beyond the dark valley her faith steadily anticipated an eternity of light and joy. But to leave me and her infant daughter in this region of tempta-

tion and sorrow, this was a trial to which her fortitude appeared unequal. We conversed sometimes on the subject. It overwhelmed us with grief, and sent us to the throne of our God to seek consolation. My prayers were not altogether fruitless to myself; but my precious fellow worshipper acquired the spirit of submission to the disposals of Heaven much faster than I did. I wish to give you the substance of our last conversations, held on the day which closed the scene. My Emily was exceedingly weak, and could only speak in broken sentences, and with frequent intervals of silence.

'Summon up your courage, my William, to meet the approaching stroke. My latest hour is not far distant. My peace with God is settled, and I await his command to depart. If ever I have done any thing displeasing to you, let me have your forgiveness.'

'My dearest, there is nothing to forgive. You have never, even in the slightest degree, displeased me, by word nor deed, no, not for a single moment.'

'I thank you for this assurance. Conscious of my many weaknesses, I was not without apprehension that I might have given offence without knowing it. To the Searcher of hearts I could safely appeal, that I had not at any time intentionally disobliged you. My dear husband, I have exulted in you as mine, and devoted myself to you, with an intensity of affection which no words could express. Leaning upon your bosom, and enfolded in your arms; hearing you call me your own Emily, your treasure and your joy; my emotions of tenderness were often almost too great for my frame to support. Perhaps, my love, we have sinned against our God in idolizing one another; and this may be the reason why he has issued the mandate for our early separation. He bids me remove, and I must leave you; but blessed be his name, we are not to be separated forever.' Tears as well as debility stopped her utterance.

'Spare me, Emily; your words of love pierce my

very soul with anguish. How can I bear the thought of losing you? Why has not God heard my supplications for a longer continuance of our union? Why must the sun of all my felicity go down in the morning?'

'Recollect yourself, my William; remember your Christian profession, and murmur not at the dispensations of infinite rectitude and wisdom. I see that we have been in danger of withdrawing our hearts from our heavenly Father in our love to each other. He breaks the bond of our earthly attachment, that he may engage our devotion more entirely to himself, and prepare us effectually for the glory which is above. I doubt not he will give you resignation quite beyond what you can at present conceive. As to your Emily, the prospect which opens before me is bright and transporting. My hope has been fixed upon a rock, even the truth of God, and remains firm and unshaken. Through that Saviour "who loved me and gave himself for me," I am delivered from all fear. Heaven is my eternal rest; and soon, soon shall I be there.'

Presently after this, she desired her child to be brought to her; took it into her arms, kissed it, and bathed its little cheeks with tears of maternal fondness. 'My sweet babe, your mother is going away from you, and you know not the loss which is befalling you. Of her who gave you birth you will have information, but no image imprinted on your heart. My husband, yet this once receive your child from these arms. Bring her up for God. To his blessing and your guidance I cheerfully commend her. You will love her as the memorial of your Emily. She will remind you of me when the pleasure of the remembrance shall overbalance the pain. I hope to meet you both where parting shall be no more.'

After some hours of very interrupted repose, my dying saint awoke, exclaiming in feeble but hurried accents, 'they are coming, I see them at hand. Hail, ye messengers from the house of my Father!' Apprehending that she was in a delirium, I asked her, 'who are coming, my love? What do you see?'

'I see, but not with those mortal eyes, a company of angels sent to convey me to the presence of my God. My trust in his mercy is strong, victorious over death and all my foes. Were you not a Christian, my William, you would wonder at my telling you that now I can even leave my child and you without regret. My soul is absorbed, enraptured, with the splendours of the New Jerusalem, into which I am about to enter. As a sinner, I am passing the river which must be passed by all, and its waters indeed are cold; but as a sinner ransomed from destruction, I feel "the love of God shed abroad in my heart," to sustain and animate me in this trying hour. "My flesh and my heart are failing; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." I am on the wing for the immediate vision of my Redeemer. I have loved him, though with much imperfection, while I saw him dimly in his word and his ordinances. Partaking of his consecrated bread and wine, I have tasted that he was gracious. But now I shall "see him as he is," face to face. I shall be transformed perfectly into his likeness; for the work which his Spirit has begun shall be completed. In the anthem of the skies will I proclaim the praises of him who bled and died on the cross for me. In his welcome I shall find that heaven which I desire. Why am I still lingering here? Why is my exile prolonged? When shall I drop this load of clay, and become immortal? Blissful moment, glorious eternity, come quickly!'

Exhausted by this overflow of extasy, which seemed at the time almost sufficient to draw me with her from the world, she sunk into silence. Her release, so ardently sought, advanced apace. She was evidently striving with the agonies of dissolution. Yet not the smallest symptom of impatience clouded her countenance. Tranquillity is much too weak a word to tell how she appeared, and how she honoured the Captain of her salvation, during this awful conflict of life and death. Her face beamed with a smile of ce-

lestial radiance. What shall I say? The joys of paradise were already springing up in her soul; and they clothed her pale, emaciated visage with a lustre, an exalted loveliness, far above all that I had ever seen it wear before.

At length she made a sign to be raised up in the bed. Laying her head upon my arm, she gently pressed my hand, and said, 'my dear, I am going home; farewell.' After struggling a few minutes for breath, she pronounced, in a low but articulate voice, and with a pathos not to be described, her last words, 'Jesus, Saviour, receive me,' and expired.

I must lay down my pen for the present. Hereafter you shall have another letter concerning my Emily: until then, and always, may the peace of God be with you.

WILLIAM MERITON.

No. 21. JUNE 2, 1814.

Causes of Defective Eloquence.

IT is a fact as notorious as it is unpleasant that we have but a small proportion of good speakers, whether we look to the bar, the senate, or the pulpit. Sometimes, indeed, we get an opportunity of hearing real eloquence; and when we do, we bow to its commanding power, and acknowledge it to be one of the noblest exertions of the faculties of man. It is natural to inquire, why is eloquence so rare? I answer, in its higher forms it can never much abound; because it is the fruit of such a force of intellect and fancy, such sensibilities of the heart, and such compass and music of the voice, all combined together, as are very seldom given to an individual; not to mention that discipline of the mind, wide and deep, which is necessary to the finished orator, and which, nevertheless, few of those who have opportunity are suffici-

eatly industrious and persevering to undergo. Still it is my opinion that any man of ordinary endowments and ordinary education may become an interesting speaker. So far as I have observed, our public speaking is much oftener spoiled by the neglect of acquisitions easily attainable, and by faults which might be avoided, than by any natural and invincible deficiency of powers. Without attempting a full discussion of this subject, I desire that the following cursory observations upon it may be taken for what they are worth.

Many speakers go on in a savage kind of way, from a gross neglect of the study of language. I can only touch upon a few particulars under this comprehensive article. Some despise all attention to the rules of grammar, and violate them without concern. Their coarse maxim is that elegance, and even grammatical propriety, are of no consequence, provided the speaker is understood. A similar fault is the negligent pronunciation of words, according to accident, or vulgar use, to the vexation of every correct ear. Some content themselves with an inaccurate, confused understanding of the significations of words. Of a precise selection they make no account. Hence they often present their ideas in a mist; or, to speak without a figure, they express either more or less than the idea intended to be conveyed, and sometimes an idea wholly different from it. Some put their words together at random, without regard to neatness or even to perspicuity of style. Speakers of this clumsy cast generally fall into repetitions, and multiply words above measure. The hearer is thrown into an uneasy position, toiling to see the drift of the ill-compacted period; and when at last, if ever, it appears, it is in some awkward attitude, like that of a reeling man who endeavours to keep himself steady. I cannot say that the study of language is neglected by the pedant; but he studies it perversely, and to a wretched purpose. His vollies of hard, uncommon words obscure his meaning, if he has any; and infallibly expose him

to the ridicule of all who have sense enough to perceive his folly. Speakers guilty of such faults as I have mentioned may dazzle the ignorant; they may be successful leaders of a mob; but they should take great care never to have a man of judgment or taste among their hearers.

The next defect which I shall notice, and it is one that ruins many a speech, is the want of a full mastery of the subject which is undertaken to be illustrated. If the speaker be too lazy to explore his subject thoroughly, or if the subject itself be too large for his powers of research, he will approach it with scanty, indistinct, and superficial views. He may proceed in his work with a bold, impudent face. He may heap up words and sentences mountain-high. He may assert, and possibly may think, that he has made the matter evident as demonstration. But all this is not eloquence. The minds and feelings of his audience, if they be not a crowd incapable of reason, will tell him that his labour, from beginning to end, is vain. We want clear ideas, well expressed, and arranged in a just method; and where these are not exhibited, we will not bend to the assuming claims of any pretender.

But the evil which does the most extensive mischief to public speaking is the affectation of feeling. We know that feeling is the very life and charm of eloquence. Hence speakers are prone to yield to the temptation, (though it is a sneaking piece of hypocrisy, and can only go down with the weakest of mankind,) to run after the appearance of feeling when they do not feel, or to pretend to feel much more than they actually do. This affectation assumes two forms. One is that of boisterous vociferation; the other is the whining, canting strain. Both these are often found at the bar, and in the legislative hall, as well as in the pulpit. True feeling is a fire which rapidly spreads into every heart; but very differently do these counterfeits operate. Noisy clamour torments our ears, and hardens our hearts against feeling. We deem our

manhood implicated in belling the trick, the fraud, with which we are assailed. Nor is the miserable whine any better. At first it fills us with disgust; and then, to escape this, we seek refuge in apathy or severe contempt. I apprehend that every unnatural manner of speaking originates in this abominable affectation; such as the snail-paced drawl, so trying to patience; the monotony, a good substitute for opium to produce sleep; the wild, turbulent, gesticulating mode, chilling as the northern blast. I would recommend to every speaker to engage in those subjects only in which it is right and honourable to feel a lively concern; and to take every method with himself which has a tendency to bring that concern into action. Let the legislator cherish in his breast an ardent love for social order and social happiness. Let the lawyer cultivate a quick and strong sense of the beauty of truth and justice. Let the preacher, (I touch his office with awe,) strive to maintain a fervent zeal for the glory of God, the destruction of iniquity, and the salvation of souls. Seriousness of spirit an honest speaker may always possess. When feelings more intense and lofty are given him, let him indulge and enjoy them. But at all events, let him cleave to sincerity. Away with empty pretences to emotion, and all the idle sham and parade of fictitious sensibility; for they are as mean in themselves as they are pernicious in their consequences.

No. 22. June 23, 1814.

Simon Silly's Apology for Ignorance.

Mr. Mountaineer,

I don't know who gave you any right to be lecturing us all in the newspapers. It may be you have taken it up of your own head. However, I would have you to know that I am old Simon Silly,

at your service, and I want to hold some talk with you. A neighbour of mine the other day desired me to peruse your fourteenth number; in which you speak disrespectfully of people who despise reading, and have no books but a few old, tattered volumes, which you call lumber unfit for use, while they have plenty both of money and time to do better in improving their minds. It struck me directly that you must mean me. If you say that you never heard of me in your life, I answer, that may be the case; yet you must have meant me notwithstanding, and it don't sit at all well upon my stomach. Though I mortally hate writing, having always found it the most pothersome thing in the world, I must tell you my mind upon this subject. Nobody likes to be sneered at, I assure you.

I wish you not to suppose that I have no books at all, or that I never have read any thing. My father left me, along with a very good farm, well improved, the famous *History of Robinson Crusoe*, with about one third of it gone at the beginning, and a *Chronicle of the Ancient Kings of Scotland*. To these I myself have added *Valentine and Orson*, and *the Pleasant Art of Money Catching*; as likewise *Entick's Dictionary*, and *Morse's Small Geography*, both of which I bought at auction, about half worn out; besides almanacs and spelling books for the use of the family. So you see I have some books as well as other people. But I know well enough that, to satisfy you, I should have to go much farther than all this in the purchase and reading of books; and these are things which I am fully resolved never to do, say what you will. For why should I? What purpose of good living can so much reading and study promote? Tell me that. My notion of things is that we were made to eat, drink, sleep, and lay up money for our children. I say, that's my notion. And whatever you may lecture about the mind, its dignity and refined enjoyments, I always make it a point that

no man shall beat me out of my notions. Is not that right, think you? Well, can't I eat my bacon ham and roast beef with as much relish, and thrive as well upon them, as any of your reading people? Would reading make me like my grog any better, which I like already quite as much as I ought, and indeed more than I like any book whatsoever? Suppose my head were stuffed with history, poetry, and that kind of outlandish things; will you take it upon you to tell me that I should sleep more soundly than I do now? Let me have none of your whimseys. All I want of you is to get you to look at the matter fairly and without prejudice; and then you must be convinced that mine is the best plan of living. Have I not made a fine fortune? Yes I have, without reading or learning, except just enough to enable me to write this letter. And as to heirs to heir my riches, I have a house full of tearing, burly-faced images of myself, who have no more disposition to be bookworms than their father. The very sight of them would at once make you own that the race of the Sillies is not in the least danger of being extinguished. So I conclude that I am exactly what I should be, and am fulfilling all the ends of my being like a reasonable creature. That's my notion, I say. And who can deny it? I am getting a five and twenty shilling master to teach my children as much as I know myself. That's enough. I don't see the smallest reason why they should have any more learning than I have. I am a rich, healthy, jolly old fellow. Such my lads may be, I suppose, if they will keep clear of wasting their time and money, and worrying their brains, with books. And I don't pretend to wish that they may take to any of your new courses.

I am informed of a man living not a hundred miles from me, but I sha'n't tell you the person I mean, who loves books extravagantly, and has been reading and studying almost all his life long. They assure me that he professes to find a vast deal of pleasure in this

sort of way, and that he looks right well contented. But he is poor, and poor like to be. I could buy fifty such fellows, out and out, on any day of the week. I really do pity him; for what good does all his bookishness do him?

As I have made such an excellent defence of myself and my ignorance, I desire you, sir, to have the candour to publish it. I know it will go against the grain with you; but we are all obliged, on some occasions, to do things that we don't find mighty agreeable. I wish to see this in print the more for its having cost me a power of labour. I never did write so much in one piece in all my born days before. If you gratify me in what I now ask, I shall wish you well, notwithstanding all that you have said against me.

SIMON SILLY.

I am an avowed lover of books. The redoubtable Simon Silly has given me what he will call a complete beating. I strongly suspect too that, to use his own phrase, he means me by the poor reading wight whom he condescends to pity, because he could buy up fifty such at a bid. Considering these circumstances, I hope I shall gain not a little credit with Mr. Silly and his numerous friends, for getting my own consent to publish his overwhelming letter. My other readers must thank me, or nobody will, for the trouble I have undergone in rendering the letter intelligible. The original spelling was most wretched, and the handwriting deplorable. I had to infuse into this performance most of the grammar that it now possesses; and the whole contained not one iota of punctuation, unless we place under that head a multitude of dashes, thrown in every where, without either rhyme or reason.

I shall conclude this paper in my own way, by recommending to my readers a very delicious and excellent little book, lately republished. It is entitled *the Dairyman's Daughter*, and is a religious narrative respecting an humble family in England. The

writer, a clergyman, has an exquisite talent for simplicity and pathos; and he asserts the affecting story to be founded on fact. I believe the reader of it will be at a loss which to prefer, the Dairyman's Daughter, or Miss Hannah More's celebrated *Shepherd of Salisbury Plain;* until his mind shall be decided in favour of the former by the reflection that it is a reality, while the latter is only an ingenious and edifying fiction.

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor."

GRAY.

No. 23. JUNE 30, 1814.

The Character of Emily.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN this letter I wish to give you a little picture of what my Emily was. If you think me tolerably successful in drawing the likeness, I know you will value it, for the original had much of your friendly regard, as you also had of hers. The bright image of her whom I aim to describe is so constantly present to my imagination, whether I am awake or asleep, that I can scarcely say I am undertaking a work of memory. How is it to be accounted for, that these melancholy musings upon my lost treasure have an attraction for me beyond all the cheerful scenes of life which invite my participation?

My Emily possessed a very uncommon share of that kind of beauty which arrests the eyes of the most superficial, and induces them to gaze with delight, and gaze again. I was never one of those who affect to think personal beauty a thing of no estimation. No; I could not contemplate without emotion the perfect symmetry of Emily's form; her vivid, dark-brown

eye; her complexion, in which the lily and the rose sweetly contended for the mastery; her features, where the nicest critic could detect no fault in any one singly, or in the whole together. I well knew, however, that it was the mind within which gave to these visible charms much the greater part of their power. Frequently, and with little concern, I had seen merely external, unanimated beauty as exquisitely finished as hers. But in the first hour that I beheld Emily Wilson, my heart began to feel impressions of admiration and tenderness to which I had before been entirely a stranger. She appeared to me

" . . . . adorn'd
With all that earth or heaven could bestow
To make her amiable: . . . . .
Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love."

MILTON.

You may perhaps remember your telling me, on the day which made Emily mine, that, excepting your lamented Julia, you had never seen so lovely a woman. When I mentioned this to her, she called you a kind and generous friend for saying it; and in the next breath, with as much sincerity as possible, disclaimed all title to so high a compliment.

Emily was not brought up in the fashionable way of the world; for no dancing master ever had any thing to do in the forming of her deportment. She was early and often introduced into polished society, but never joined in the giddy amusements of a ball room. Her education, which was principally conducted, from its commencement to its end, by her excellent mother, was far more solid than showy. She managed her domestic affairs with consummate skill and dexterity. Her mind was stored with various kinds of useful and ornamental knowledge, suitable to her sex; and she loved the reading of good authors dearly, though she never suffered it to interfere with her incumbent duties. In her I found not only an affectionate and pre-

cious mistress of my heart, but also a rational, well informed friend and counsellor. Who can compute the amount of such a treasure?

From her personal attractions, the strength and cultivation of her mind, the natural gentleness of her disposition, and the elegancy of her manners, my Emily must have been what the world calls a very fine woman. But for several years before my first acquaintance with her, religion had become the decided basis of her character, the pure and sublime religion of the gospel. It infused its own sacred spirit into all her thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Her piety was enlightened, fervent, constant; not a matter of vain ostentation, not an occasional ebullition of passion; but a steady, comprehensive principle of devotion to God, accompanied with a firm, unlimited reliance upon his mercy. Hence that radiant cheerfulness which delighted all her friends, and which hardly ever suffered a moment's interruption. And as she deeply felt her inexpressible obligations to the love of a crucified Saviour, she was, beyond all other persons whom I ever knew, lowly in mind, clothed with the Christian garb of genuine humility.

Her piety to God of course invigorated as well as sanctified her native benevolence. Her watchful care to please me and to make me happy, a care which, I trust, was in some good measure reciprocated on my part, will dwell in my remembrance forever. But her active kindness was not bounded by her little domestic circle. Always and in every place she was tenderly cautious not to give offence by look, word, or deed, and desirous to spread innocent pleasure around her. "In her tongue was the law of kindness." Like her heavenly Master, she "went about doing good; rejoicing with them that rejoiced, and weeping with them that wept." She made it her business to enter the humble dwellings of the poor, to cheer the drooping spirits of the sick, to administer liberally to the wants of the needy, and to wipe from the eye of

the afflicted the tear of sorrow. Often "the blessing of them that were ready to perish came upon her:" often she "caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." As I told you in my former letter, it was an exertion of this ardent benevolence which brought on her last illness, and occasioned her removal,—shall I say, to an untimely grave? Let me rather say, to a world of perfect and eternal bliss, where she "rests from her labours, and her works follow her."

But another characteristic by which my Emily was highly distinguished was one which I have habituated myself to express by the name of simplicity. You and I, my friend, have always agreed entirely as to the nature and loveliness of this quality. It is the direct reverse of all affectation, parade, and hypocrisy, the transparency of a mind that needs no concealment. It was manifest in Emily's conversation: when she thought proper to speak, she spoke the very thoughts of her heart, without the least tincture of artifice or disguise. Even her language was as plain and unlaboured as it was correct and impressive. Her singing, in which you know she excelled, was in the same noble, artless style. How sweet to me were the accents of her voice! Sometimes, for a moment, I fancy that I hear them still. Alas, the next moment tells me that the tongue and the lips which used to enchant me are mouldering in the dust.

On the subject of dress, in which her sex generally take so lively an interest, and ours not much less, my dear Emily carried plainness to the utmost allowable extent. She did not object to dressing richly, according to her station in life; was always neat, and always clean; but would wear nothing gaudy nor superfluous. She despised the little, childish, ever changing flourishes of fashion; and abhorred every mode of dress injurious to health, or incompatible with delicacy. Of gold she wore nothing, except the plain ring which you saw me put upon her finger on our happy day. She could never be persuaded to undergo

the absurd torture of having her ears perforated. Her appearance, harmonious in every part, made upon the beholder a strong impression of dignity and of elegance. No article of her attire was calculated to attract particular attention; and when she left a company, scarcely any one remembered what she had on.

The whole of her manners corresponded most engagingly with the tempers which I have described. Her affability, her kindness, her respectful but not burdensome complaisance, rendered every one easy and cheerful in her society who deserved the privilege of being there. None but the wicked could feel embarrassed in her presence.

Such was my Emily. Assuredly I have not exaggerated her excellence. She is taken from me, and in this world I shall see her no more; but she lives in heaven, and awaits my arrival in that glorious region. O to be there, far from this vale of death, and sorrow, and weeping! Let wretched atheists talk of everlasting sleep, and the extinction of souls. We know better; we know whose word we have believed, and can trust Him for its accomplishment. Emily and Julia, the beloved of our hearts, shall meet us at the entrance of the celestial paradise, and welcome us to its unutterable and immortal felicity. Under all my distress, I find consolation, great consolation, in repeating my Emily's own words; "God separates us; but blessed be his name, we are not to be separated forever."

My dear friend, may God ever bless you. Farewell.

WILLIAM MERITON.

No. 24. JULY 21, 1814.

On Articulation in Speaking.

I HOLD it to be an important branch of education to give to our youth a full command of their mother

tongue. Some, nay many, will probably think me too great a stickler for minute accuracy on this sort of subjects. I wish they would let me rectify their taste; for I cannot look upon any thing as a trifle that contributes to our extended knowledge and just application of the language which we have to use daily and hourly through the whole course of our lives.

The point which I wish to urge in this paper is distinctness in the pronunciation of words, or what is otherwise called a good articulation. The correct rule is, that in speaking or reading, every letter and syllable which the acknowledged standard requires to be sounded be in such a manner sounded as to be heard with ease, and without danger of mistake. I doubt whether I am able to describe bad articulation in all its modes; some of them, and perhaps the most common, I will mention. There is a mumbling kind of pronunciation, which we often meet with. The ear is assaulted with a buzz, like the humming of bees, instead of being gratified with the pleasure which regulated speech affords. I do not mean that the mumbler absolutely loses any part of the word he is speaking; but he slurs over the word, or some portion of it, in a manner so clumsy, so much the reverse of clearness, that we find an effort of attention necessary to understand what he says. This defect may arise from some unfavourable conformation of the organs of elocution, which should be remedied, if possible, by early and vigorous endeavours to articulate well; from the loss of teeth, which scarcely admits of any remedy; but much oftener, in my opinion, it arises from laziness and negligence, confirmed into inveterate habit. There is a hurried and rapid manner of pronouncing, which runs words, and especially the syllables of a word, most disagreeably into each other; and often flings out letters and syllables entirely, which ought to be sounded. You are dragged along, with a painful and dizzying precipitancy, to keep up with this impetuous clatter. And you are tempted to think

that such a speaker or reader imagines himself bound to utter a certain quantity of matter in about half the requisite time, or go to the penitentiary if he fail of accomplishing the task. Or at least you suspect him of indifference about putting you into the full and easy possession of his own or his author's meaning.

I request my readers to consider the consequences of a bad articulation. It offends taste, as a departure from a settled standard of propriety. When a standard is fixed about any thing, even where we see no reason why it is so fixed, we are necessarily disgusted with a deviation from it, unless we perceive some positive, strong argument in favour of the deviation. But this is not the worst. A shabby articulation fatigues the attention of the hearer. The sense of hearing, the power of guessing, and the patience of us mortals under trying circumstances, have their limits. Whatever I may think of my conjecturing faculties, I believe my hearing to be as acute, and my patience as extensive, as those of most other people; yet I am sometimes sorely worried by the want of a distinct, deliberate pronunciation in those whom I hear speaking or reading. And here it occurs to remark, in passing, that some public speakers might be heard better, and to a greater distance, at much less expense of voice, if they would take care to pronounce with proper distinctness and emphasis. Finally, I appeal to experience to confirm my assertion that, in the intercourse of life, troublesome misunderstandings and misrepresentations sometimes proceed from the mere want of this distinctness in the use of speech.

The conclusion may safely be drawn from what I have said, and indeed must be drawn, that whatever talents any man may possess, and whatever attainments in knowledge; they must suffer under a partial eclipse, and their usefulness be very considerably less than it ought to be, if he speak not clearly and gracefully the current language of his country.

I offer these hints to young persons generally, but

especially to the teachers of our English schools. A teacher of children should be fully a master of pronunciation in all its extent. And he should have an ear of nice sensibility, ready to feel the wound of a defective articulation, that he may be careful to banish it from his school. He should insist upon it that his pupils take time and take heed to express themselves rightly, as to manner as well as matter, and to use to the best advantage the powers of utterance with which they are naturally endowed. Impossibilities, I own, no man can conquer. And after all that can be done in this affair, there will be some very respectable people in the understanding of whose speech we must endure some trouble. Even these, however, may fairly be reminded that what they say should have a value proportioned to the labour which their manner of expressing it imposes on our attention. It is a poor business, in hearing one talk, as well as in reading a book, to be obliged at once to toil severely and get nothing for our pains.

No. 25. AUGUST 4, 1814.

Advice to a Young Lady.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

SIR,

I HOPE you have no objection to receiving a letter from one of your female readers. You went on for a long while in so grave a way about one thing or another, that it seemed as if we and our interests were to obtain no notice from you; and I must tell you that a squad of us girls were growing a good deal out of humour with you on that account. Some of your late numbers have made us think a little better of you. When we got the paper containing Emily's last conversations with her husband, it made even our giddy hearts serious; and we felt constrained to acknow-

ledge that, however we might like to live, it was devoutly to be wished that we might die as Emily died. You may tell your afflicted friend that he has my sympathy; and you will accept the same for yourself, on the loss of your Julia, if you please.

But I will proceed to my own affairs. I am a young girl, sir; and I wish to become an amiable woman. I wish the world to be pleased with me and esteem me. But alas, I have very little beauty to rely upon. Some of your satirical men have asserted that every girl in her teens thinks herself handsome; but I venture to assure you that the assertion is not true. When I am even in the best mood to think favourably of myself, I cannot believe that I am at all above the middling class as to beauty. Is not this an unfortunate and dismaying circumstance? You may confidently bespeak homage for a fine woman, who exhibits symmetry of shape, sparkling eyes, a complexion in which lilies and roses are blended, and so on. But I pray you, what are we homely people to do? Must we not necessarily retreat into the shade, while beauty fixes every eye, and wins every heart? Can you indicate any course for me to take, that I may escape the mortification of being a neglected cypher in society? You see what are my wishes, and what are my fears. If you have any advice to give in such a case, it will be thankfully received by

CLARA FRANKLEY.

Clara's letter is most welcome. I perceive that she needs some good counsel; and I entertain a confidence also that she has an ingenuousness of temper which will prevent good counsel from being given her in vain. The rest of this number shall be cheerfully devoted to the consideration of her case; and if she find me no flatterer, I hope she will allow me to be a better thing, a sincere friend.

First of all, my kind correspondent, I thank you

for your sympathy with my friend Meriton and myself under our most painful bereavements. We have lost the objects which we held the dearest upon earth; but we feel that the condolence of a benevolent heart has power to alleviate affliction.

You wish to be amiable, to have the world pleased with you, and to enjoy its esteem. Here let me begin my admonitions. There is an approbation far more highly to be prized, far more earnestly to be sought, than that of the world; I mean the approbation of God and your own conscience. In offering you my best advice relative to your conduct, and my best wishes for your happiness, I dare not omit this point, nor even postpone it as a matter of secondary moment. Go to the gospel; learn without delay the lessons of sacred wisdom which it teaches, and reduce them to practice. Make it your supreme rule always to do what is right, what is pleasing to God. A life of piety will raise your heart above earthly vanities, and continually bring you nearer to heaven. In the mean time, it will secure to you the cordial esteem of the good and wise amongst mankind. If the world shall let you take this course without opposition, it will be well: if not, be assured that you will find the coldness or the frowns of the world richly compensated, here as well as hereafter, by the blessings of religion.

But I must give you my thoughts upon this deficiency of personal beauty which you so candidly acknowledge, and which seems to cause you so much anxiety. I will not affect to say that the beauty which strikes the eye is nothing; if I did, the feelings of all human hearts would contradict me. But I can assert, without fear of refutation, that the charms which depend merely on shape, complexion, and feature, are very little things, both in themselves and in comparison with other qualifications which, under the blessing of God, all may hope to attain. Often have I seen brilliant external beauty spoiled by vanity, rendered insipid by ignorance, or made even disgusting

and hateful by malevolent tempers. On the other hand, I have frequently seen homely faces, much homelier, I suppose, than yours, Clara, illuminated by thorough education, and beaming with kindness, so as to be wonderfully agreeable and fascinating. The instance in which I first observed this was a remarkable one. I was introduced to a lady who was far from being young, and who had never been handsome. During the little shyness and reserve of a commencing acquaintance, I thought that homely was scarcely a word strong enough to characterize her appearance. But by and by I found her to be a highly improved, prudent, and excellent woman; and could not help being astonished at the change which I seemed to discover, and did actually discover, in her features. It was the unfolding of her mind and heart which wrought the transformation. No, Clara, there is no reason, believe me, why you should despair of obtaining both esteem and love, merely for your want of that finished outward beauty which a few possess, and most of those few, I fear, not much to their own benefit. I do not wish that you should come obtrusively forward into public view; but neither do I see any cause to sentence you to the shades of obscurity. Without entering into tedious details, I think I shall point out to you ways and means to ensure your success in conquering hearts, and to render your conquests lasting. Only I must require you to soar above the adulation of triflers and coxcombs, and to fix your regard upon the affections of the intelligent and the worthy.

Diligently learn and practise those things which make a woman useful in domestic life. This is not a courtly subject, but it is a necessary one. The great author of Paradise Lost, to whom your sex is deeply indebted, very properly represents our first mother as "studious of household good," and makes her shine in her domestic cares and arrangements. People of sense, Clara, are not to be permanently attached by

the beauty and the air which blaze in a dancing assembly, and dazzle the eye with their splendour. They look for the habit of skilful attention to the many little, quiet offices which make up the aggregate of home-born comforts. How can fashionable accomplishments, displayed abroad, atone for a slatternly appearance at home, a table which disgusts the senses, and a parlour where every thing is out of order? I have suggested the principle, but you cannot expect me to enumerate the particulars; your mother, your aunt, or your preceptress, must tell you what is to be done, and teach you how to do it.

Next, I earnestly exhort you to labour in the culture of your mind by reading. If you have much leisure, read much; if not, employ in this way the little time which you can save for it. A few books, well chosen and well read, will afford you large stores of useful and pleasing knowledge. I say, well read; not hurried over by the eye, while the mind goes truanting after other things, but thoroughly examined, understood, and digested. And how can we pay much regard to a reckless being who does not think nor inquire nor reason; who suffers the immortal part to remain uncultivated, and wholly occupied with momentary trifles, like a garden of fertile soil overgrown with weeds and briers? I hope I do not mistake your disposition when I suppose it would give you more pleasure than pain to hear that the judicious had spoken of you in such terms as the following. 'Miss Frankley is not a killing beauty, nor a reigning toast among the beaux; but she is something a thousand times better, a woman of enlightened understanding and polished taste. Only unlock her modest reserve by respectful and encouraging attentions, and you are sure to find with her a feast of rational conversation. In the commerce of mind and of fancy, she is abundantly qualified both to receive entertainment and to return it with interest.'—Should not this be prized far beyond all the fleeting admiration which merely

visible beauty and outside accomplishments can inspire? Besides, the habit of reading is, next to devotion and tender friendship, the surest resource for consolation under the afflictions to which we are exposed in this mortal state.

Once more, I must urge it upon you, with my utmost zeal, to cherish and strengthen in yourself a quick sensibility to the joys and sorrows of your fellow creatures, an enlarged and active benevolence of heart. This is the most glorious and divine trait of any human character. It is not only a precious substitute for personal beauty; but the highest beauty of this sort, if not supported by a meek, gentle, compassionate spirit, will prove a mere bubble, which must speedily burst, and its charms disappear forever. And let me tell you, Clara, that genuine benevolence is not to be acquired by speculation, nor by shedding useless tears over the fictitious distress or happiness of a novel. No; you must daily use vigilance and exertion to subdue your own selfish passions. You must make a business of promoting the welfare and satisfaction of others, so far as you lawfully may. You must seek out the children of sorrow, and labour to give them relief; an employment less alluring, indeed, but infinitely more noble, than that of lounging and weeping in the fairy land of romance. Above all, pray to the God of love that he may give you the spirit of love; and imitate the example of that Saviour who loved us, though we were his enemies, even so as to endure for us the death of the cross. This will assuredly create a little heaven in your bosom; the foretaste and the pledge of that eternal heaven which is above. And as to those with whom you have to do here, I am persuaded there are few people so brutish as not to be touched with gratitude and good will by strenuous and persevering efforts to make them happy.

Wishing that you may become, in the best sense of the expression, such a woman as my Julia was, and in due time such as she now is, I bid you cordially farewell.

No. 26. JANUARY 12, 1815.

Account of Simon Silly and his Family.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

YOUR correspondent Simon Silly is a neighbour of mine; and I think it may be useful to relate how he attained that wonderful height of self-sufficiency which emboldens him to treat the most respectable part of mankind with contempt.

When Simon was a boy, the inhabitants of this neighbourhood were poor, especially in comparison with their present abundance. His father was an unlettered, low-minded animal; and most of those around him were of the same cast. To get the better of each other in small trucking was the first lesson which their children learned. Common farming occupations and occasional hunting consumed their time, and the acquisition of money was the grand incentive of all their actions. During the winter months, for two or three years after they had attained to the age of fourteen, they were taught by a hedge schoolmaster to mumble over their letters, and squeal out their words; in reading, to defy all gravity and comprehension; in writing, to despise all orthography, punctuation, and legibility. Simon himself can much better recollect the severe castigations which he received for the length of time he occupied in learning the alphabet than any other events of his juvenile life. It is well he does not boast of his learning. He can scarcely read a word of three syllables without stopping to spell it. His writing you have seen; I wish your printer could have given us a fac-simile of it. And his arithmetic is pretty well exhausted in shaving a bond, at the rate of one third or one fourth deducted from its amount.

His children are growing up to their sort of maturity. Some little spirit of improvement has, of late years, come into the vicinage; but Simon's family have hardly any participation of it. If they receive any mental aid, it is in the old way; instruction must

be imparted to them by him who will work cheapest; by a wooden head, who will contract to furnish all necessary knowledge, through the medium of a spelling book, for five and twenty or thirty shillings a year.

What is the consequence? Simon's sons can plow a field, and thresh out wheat; good things in their place. They are also quite capital at wrestling and foot races. But how are we to find among them the enlightened and incorruptible legislator or magistrate, the discerning juryman, the fervent, active Christian? His daughters, besides knowing the common domestic arts which are useful, can net tassels and fringe, and romp at a festive assembly. But how shall we find, in their circle, the wife who can render home cheerful and enrapturing throughout a stormy winter day, by the charms of her conversation? The mother, who can imbue her infant's mind with useful truths adapted to its tender capacity, and cultivate in her offspring those beauties which never decay? The endeared companion, who can alleviate her husband's corroding cares, and comfort him in adversity? The nurse, whose sympathy will anticipate pain, soothe in sickness, and soften the pillow of death with affectionate prayer and Christian consolation? No such woman is likely to be married in Simon Silly's house. His boys and girls prefer external show to the accomplishments of the understanding and the heart. And while their father almost shudders at the thought of paying a reasonable compensation to a teacher who would promote the best interests of his children, he boasts of the liberality with which he rewards a frivolous dancing master for scraping their scanty pittance of wit from their heads to their heels.

By much persuasion Simon was prevailed upon, not long since, to spend twenty five cents in purchasing *the Dairyman's Daughter*. But he says it is money thrown away, for he cannot understand it. On hearing this, a worthy neighbour told Simon that he ought by all means to procure for his family the books,

on most of them, which you recommended some time ago for the plain farmer's library. He replied, with a look of great alarm, 'all they would cost more than a hundred dollars!' 'But what is that,' said the neighbour, 'to a man of your wealth? Only reckon up the account, Simon. You are cheating your children out of a proper and suitable education, and have never yet disbursed one hundred dollars upon them all, to qualify them either for respectability in this world, or happiness beyond the grave.' At last, in a tone rather impatient, Simon said he would consider of it.

Go on, sir, in your endeavours to increase the taste for reading in the community. Your labours cannot ultimately remain fruitless. Exhibit to our youth the pleasures and advantages of knowledge. And especially strive to convince them that a relish for literature has a powerful tendency to preserve them from the vile haunts of dissipation, the contagion of bad company, and the benumbing effects of indolence; that it cherishes every noble sentiment, every valuable disposition, every refined affection; and raises man to an elevation far superior to that which results from the success of intriguing ambition and the possession of riches.

If I discover any improvement in Simon's younger children, I will inform you without delay.

Yours,

C. PETER.

The Mountaineer will be glad to hear of any reformation in Simon's family; but fears that the prospect of it, so far as depends on Simon himself, is quite desperate. He seems too old and riveted in folly ever to become wise.

Ludovico's poetical address to the Mountaineer has been received. It is marked, *for the Mountaineer*, possesses merit, and is intended to confer honour upon me and my writings. But, friendly bard, how can I publish it? I trust you do not overrate my aims and

motives; but you bestow praise upon this poor head of mine far, very far beyond my humble pretensions. On this account, the reading of these verses, even in private, gives me a degree of pain. As to my publishing them, the thing is impossible; my own conscience would smite me, and I should cover myself with ridicule.

No. 27. FEBRUARY 16, 1815.

Complaint of Caleb Comfortless.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

AS you appear to be a middling plain kind of man, and seem disposed to do all the good you can for every body, whether wise or ignorant, wealthy or poor, and don't put on any proud airs; I have taken up the notion of trying what you will do for me, in a certain matter that troubles me a great deal more than all my money. To come to the point as soon as possible, let me inform you that I am nothing more nor less than a homespun country farmer; who have not much of an education, except what I have picked up by my own labours from a few good old books of my grandfather's; to which I add now and then a new one, to supply me with reading in the long winter nights. I have very little of any thing to boast of, except my industry, my farm, and stock; on which heads I have no reason to complain, being as well off in these respects, and perhaps a little better, than most of my neighbours. But there are some things that knock all my happiness on the head; and I am afraid, if no cure can be found, that they will, after a while, sink me down into a spiritless vegetable. I mean the want of a wife, and the difficulties which lie in the way of my getting one. I have been living to myself in my own castle several years; during which I have, in a great measure, been my own cook and housekeeper. For although I have a couple of negro

girls who are well able to do every kind of work; yet as they are very careless, and withal not mighty honest, unless they are closely looked after, an employ for which I have not leisure; why, you see, they might destroy for me more than their work would be worth. And therefore I have thought it best to keep them hired out, and try, with the help of a small black boy, to manage my domestic concerns myself; still hoping that it would not be long until I should be fortunate enough to take to myself a helpmate. I give you my word that I have lost no time in doing every thing I could in the courting line; and have been at it, quite busy and in earnest, for near four years; but am still seemingly as far off from having a wife as I was when I set out. And what do you think has been the cause of my want of success? Why, sir, I will tell you. I live in the neighbourhood of a village, in which there is a set of young upstart fellows who half court all the good-looking girls for miles around; and never fail to make such impressions on their easy credulity as always to have them more or less in love. And yet one of those same fellows would not marry one of these girls if he knew it would save her life. For the truth is, they court them merely to pass away the time, to toy with them, and to make fun of them afterwards. All this while, myself, and many other hard-working boys hereabouts, who would be glad to marry them, and would make them good husbands too, if they would accept us, are treated, especially in the presence of these ruffle-bosomed coxcombs, whom it serves for an addition to their sport, as if we were unworthy of the notice of any thing but sluts, and such-like rubbish. And if I chance, at any lucky season, to get a little into the good graces of one of the less noted of these girls, who has not yet had her pate turned topsyturvy with the whim-whams and giddy fooleries of the town fops; before ever I can bring her fairly into the notion of marrying, they find out my views, by the whispers of the folks around us, or by the imprudence

of the girl herself, and so turn in to their usual practice, and chouse me out of her. And so it goes. Now, I think, Mr. Mountaineer, that this is, some how or other, a very unfair business, and should be glad that some plan might be found to put a stop to it. I could mention to you a hundred cases in which I have been ridiculed, and treated with more contempt than a dog, by girls who have no right to think any better of themselves than of me, merely because they had dangling after them a few town beaux, who were learning to spout a little latin, or talk about law and physic, mathematics and grammar, banking systems, and such things, of which, perhaps, with all their fuss, I understand nearly as much as they do. I have frequently, on sunday at church, seen six or eight of our neighbour girls crowded into a pew for the purpose, it seemed, (instead of attending to the sacred duties of the day and place,) of profaning the holy sabbath and consecrated house of prayer, by whispering and frisking and giggling, while what they are pleased to call the sunburnt humpkins entered the aisles. And many are the times that I have seen them look at their finical gallants with a wink and sly snigger, and then glance their eyes upon myself and my labouring companions, as if we had been despicable ragamuffins, only fit to be pointed at by the finger of scorn and derision. And when, on any public occasion, such as a husking, a raising, and the like, it becomes necessary for several of the girls to be collected together, for the sake of assisting in the preparation of a dinner or supper, those forward foplings never fail to get wind of it some way or other; and, as I believe, it is often notified to them, perhaps always, by the girls themselves. And who should be there but they? They come dashing on their pampered ponies; and every thing must stand aside then, for 'the gentlemen have arrived!' No room in the house but what they ransack; they are privileged gentry, and go where they please. They are sure never to do any work; and yet all must give way

until they get a seat at the first table. And then, with their compliments and high-bred figuring, nobody else can be permitted to say a word of plain sense, or even lay hold on one of the dishes, until the victuals are cold, and time enough spent for the eating of two or three meals. And if any one of us unpolished ninnies puts a hand upon a dish, ten to one but all the fashionables, male and female, drop their knives and forks, and fixing their eyes on the carver, gaze and grin, and sometimes laugh aloud, until, through bashfulness, he either quits his task, or performs it he knows not how. Am I wrong now, Mr. Mountaineer, in saying that these impertinent skipjacks should be taught their places, and hindered from imposing upon the girls by taking advantage, as they do, of their ignorance of the world and exposure to deception? I have no doubt you will support me in this proposition. And farther, I will maintain that the girls would act a wiser part for themselves in marrying us honest lads; with whom they might live happily, instead of wasting away their days and their bloom, and getting their brains dizzied by keeping the company of unprincipled creatures, who have no other design than basely to play with their sensibility, and to interfere with the pretensions of the upright-hearted farmer or mechanic, merely through malice, and the pride of imagined superiority. I could write you many things more upon the subject; for I feel deeply concerned in it, both on account of the poor, deluded girls, and on my own account. But my letter is already a long one, and I must conclude by subscribing myself yours with respect,

C. CALEB COMFORTLESS.

* If my correspondent has represented matters correctly, which I see no reason to dispute, there is much hardship in his case. No lectures of mine, however, would be so likely to mend the state of affairs around him as the publishing of his own communication in all its unvarnished simplicity. If this be insufficient

to check the shameful career of the beaux, and bring the infatuated girls to their senses, I advise Caleb to leave them to their folly; and seek his matrimonial fortune in some other quarter. Were he here, I could show him a couple of scores of fine, handsome maidens, to whom such worthy young men as I take him and his friends to be would not long be obliged to make their suit in vain.

No. 28. April 27, 1815.

Simon Silly's Defence of Himself.

AS old Simon Silly thinks himself very badly treated in my twenty sixth number, it is but fair to allow him room for his own vindication. And I do it the more willingly, as he has gotten somebody, this time, to transcribe his letter for him, and so has saved me the irksome labour of decyphering it.

Mr. Mountaineer,

Who is this Peter, I wonder, that knows so much of me and mine? Whoever he may be, he has written to you about me in a way that I can't patiently bear; and you don't seem disposed to take my part in the least. No; you are leagued together in a combination against me. But I hope you will afford an injured man liberty to defend himself once more.

Peter tries hard to make me appear ridiculous in the eyes of the public. But it is more than he can do, or you either, with all your talk; for I am worth sixty thousand dollars, remember that, sir. It is impossible that any man should be ridiculous who is worth sixty thousand dollars. That's my notion.

Peter maliciously supposes me to bear in mind the floggings which I suffered in learning my letters. And what then? So I do bear them in mind, and always shall; but not with the mortification which he ima-

gines. My master used to beat me very plentifully, for two reasons; namely, because he was a very cross-grained, passionate animal, and because I was born for better things than loving a book. It was my full intention to pay him for it all when I should grow to be a man; but he turned a corner, and escaped my revenge. Poor fellow, he killed himself in a few years by hard drinking.

Well, but it seems I make a miserable appearance at spelling, reading, writing, and cyphering. And what of all that? I tell you, I never loved learning; I had other fish to fry than poring over books, quill-driving, and that sort of things. But a word or two about this shaving business. I have been a shaver, and a keen one, even from my early boyhood. It is a good thing which I learned from my father; and if you think it wrong in me to take advantage of my neighbour's necessities to get his paper from him, or any other property, at the lowest possible rate, I say, that's not my notion. And you may take old Simon's word for it, I am by no means singular in this way of thinking. I know that a prejudice and a clamour are kept up against us shavers. People talk about our extortions; but—in short, I am worth sixty thousand dollars, as I told you before. You will be pleased to tell me, if you can, how I should have gathered half that sum in the straight forward road of plodding industry. There's a choke-pear for you, or I am a booby.

Then Peter goes on, (still blaming me,) with a string of doleful lamentations over my children. He thinks my boys will not be able legislators, magistrates, nor jurymen; that my girls are likely to make but indifferent wives; and grieves much that we have no Christianity amongst us. Well, what care I for all this? He may spare his pity, or transfer it to those who are low in the cash line. I shall give each of my children, as they leave me, five thousand dollars; and with this they will make their way well enough. In the mean time, I should despise them if

they did not prefer a good fiddle and a merry hop to all the books and learning in the universal world. Old as I am, I like to foot it with them myself, when my grog puts me up to it. I say, it is time enough to think of religion a great many years hence. When death comes, we must go, that's certain; but of all things I dislike the thoughts of dying.

There was one Thomas Trueman, a neighbour of ours; I can still remember him, though he died long ago. He would not let his children join us in our sunday rambles, when we went out hunting, fishing, and the like. Neither would he unite with us in our twenty shilling school. So he got three or four people, as odd and obstinate as himself, to agree with him in setting up a school of their own sort. The whole number of their scholars was not very large; and yet they must have a sober, moral man, a man of tip-top learning too, for the teacher. You can easily draw the consequence; the education of their children cost them vast sums of money. Nevertheless Thomas would bring himself still lower in the world by the continual exercise of charity, giving away something of what he had to all who were distressed, as if the troubles of other people were his own. I have seen him weeping and smiling together, while he endeavoured to explain the delight of what he called traveling out of the narrow sphere of self; but I did not relish that species of journey, and could never comprehend his feelings, nor listen with any pleasure to his enthusiastic discourse. Besides, though his affairs always prospered, he seemed to be determined not to grow rich. My father, (who was a good hand at a joke, and so am I,) was in the habit of laughing heartily at neighbour Trueman's carelessness about wealth. 'Tom,' said he, 'will neither save nor shave; and with all his sense and reading, he will die poor.' The prophecy was a sound one, and was exactly fulfilled. And what shall we say of his children? Why, they are very well informed, industrious, ho-

nest people; very religious and charitable. One of them is a physician in good practice; another makes a figure in our state assembly. But as they all follow their father's ways, their fortunes have not increased fast, not half so fast as mine. Indeed, according to my notions, I may say they are all poor to this day.

About a year ago, in a severe fit of sickness, I confess I did wish that I had lived and acted like the Truemans. But it was a fancy, which left me with my fever; and I hope it will be long before it returns again.

I am quite tired of writing, and must hasten to have done with it. When Peter finishes his abuse of me, you come on and clinch it with a vengeance. You punch me to the very midriff at a single stroke. You say that I am too old and riveted in folly ever to become wise. How dare you say so? What is wisdom but the art of getting money? My vexation would choke me, but for the reflection that I am worth sixty thousand dollars. Pray what are you worth, sir? Can you give as good an account of your wisdom as I do of mine? In short, I shall follow my notions, because they are my own, and I know them to be the best; and you may follow yours, such as they are, till you exchange them for such as are better.

SIMON SILLY.

It is easy to discern that unless I adopt Simon's notions, as he calls them, which I trust it is impossible I ever shall do, I am to lie under his contempt to the end of the chapter. This load I must bear as calmly as I can. He thinks he has obtained a glorious victory; and will be confirmed in the opinion, if I do not renew the battle. But the wise Solomon mentions people of a certain description whom one might "bray in a mortar among wheat with a pestle," to no manner of purpose. And as I do not love to toil with such an assurance of accomplishing nothing by it, I shall henceforward leave the impenetrable Simon Silly to pursue his own courses without farther molestation.

In a note handed to me the other day, I am asked, "how shall a man act, against whom a number of hard things have been said, but who is conscious of his own innocency?" This is a situation which sometimes exists, and I admit that it is far from being a pleasant one. The best answer that I can give to the question may be contained in a few words. The laws and courts of the country are open, for the repulsion of slander; but these should not be resorted to, except in strong cases, which seldom occur. In ordinary instances, I recommend to the writer to keep his temper as cool as possible, and to put down the injurious reports which assail his peace, by a steady, persevering course of right conduct. A fabric is not likely to maintain its standing long, if it have no solid foundation to rest upon. I will only add that, under the severest reproaches, an approving conscience is far more consolatory than all the applauses of the world would be without it.

No. 29. May 11, 1815.

Filial Ingratitude.

IT was my lot, early in life, to weep over the grave of a most affectionate mother. She was taken away about the time when I began rightly to understand the value of such a friend; and from that mournful day, I have scarcely met with any thing so much calculated to rouse my indignation as ingratitude and disrespect in children toward their parents. Very willingly, therefore, do I present the following communication to my readers.

Mr. Mountaineer,

The fifth commandment of the decalogue always fills me with melancholy thoughts of human nature. How lamentable to find that there is a necessity for the injunction, "honour thy father and thy

mother!" Surely every reflecting mind must acknowledge that it is utterly impossible to make adequate returns of respect, love, and obedience, for that tender parental care which has guided our helpless years, and been exercised towards us with such unceasing solicitude as we came forward to maturity. Such are the anxieties, such the labours of parents for the welfare of their offspring, that they have a right to all the comfort which can be administered by filial piety, under the pressures of age, sickness, and death. And it is in such circumstances alone that any thing like a corresponding return can be made. When the heart is overwhelmed with distress, it is a great aggravation of it to apprehend that no one feels intimately concerned in our sufferings. And we may as truly say that consoling words, and even looks, prompted by sympathy, are a more acceptable service than the most laboured attentions which motives of interest can suggest.

Old age is deprived of many of those sources of pleasure which youth affords. Upon a correct inquiry, it will be found that much of the worldly happiness of parents is derived from the good conduct of their children. Unnatural and wicked in the highest degree must that child be who denies to declining life this strong cordial, this almost solitary earthly support. Strange and impious, however, as such a thing must be deemed, cases have occurred to prove its possibility. Are no instances known of sons, on whom their parents have bestowed every opportunity of literary and polite education, rebelling, afterwards, against the most judicious advice of a father, resisting the tearful importunities of a mother; and, in spite of all, leading lives which tend to the disgrace of their connexions, and their own individual ruin? Have there not been some who, after inheriting large paternal estates, and forming new and interesting relations by marriage, have so far indulged a false and detestable pride of supposed importance as to become ashamed of the authors of their being? Yes; we have oc-

casionally seen such a monster as could even deny the parent from whose bosom he drew his first nourishment, and who watched, like a guardian angel, over his infant slumbers. Similar evidences of depravity, too, are sometimes exhibited in that sex to which we resort for every thing that is gentle, virtuous, and soothing. What shall we say of such hateful misbehaviour? None but the most thoughtless, none but the most callous, can be grossly deficient in those filial regards, which the dictates of the heart, of reason, and of scripture, equally enforce as proper and binding upon us. How miserably must it disturb the conscience of a child to reflect, when his parent is no more, that he himself has probably, by his perverseness and undutiful carriage, brought down the grey hairs of that aged parent with sorrow to the grave! What anguish must attend the thought, that these injuries, so many in number, and so peculiar in guilt, it is now utterly and forever impracticable to redress!

The following tale is well adapted to depict the retribution of a just providence upon undutiful children.

Basilius Valentinus had become so skilled in the hermetic art that he was enabled to compose certain articles which possessed a power of restoring life, if applied within a limited time. Finding his frame grown crazy with toil and meditation, and sensible of his approaching end, he called to his bed side his son Alexandrinus, and communicated to him the wonderful effects of his discovery. 'This gallipot and vial, my son, contain such powers as shall revive the springs of life when they have but just ceased to act, and will restore the body to as great a duration as it before enjoyed. But my beloved son, care must be taken to apply the ointment within ten hours after the breath has left the body; and when symptoms of returning life appear, administer the balsam.' In a few days he died. But so great was the grief of the son, that he let the important hour pass by. The truth was, that Alexandrinus chose rather to preserve

the medicine for his own use than to restore a dead father to the possession of an estate which he was so solicitous to keep in his own hands. All-corroding time at length brought Alexandrinus to his last hour. He now called to him his son Renatus; and knowing the predominating passion of the young man for wealth, a passion which he had every reason to believe was inherited from himself, he endeavoured to work upon his avarice rather than his filial affection. 'This vial and this earthen pot, child, will make you the richest man in the kingdom. I am going to die, but will not return to common dust; for by the application of the ointment and balsam in an hour after death, the corpse will turn to gold.' It would be useless to describe the scene of unfeigned tenderness that passed between the father and the son. Suffice it to say that, while the one urged a compliance, the other, at the same moment that he gave assurances of obedience, declared that he would not cut off the least bit of him but upon the utmost extremity. Alexandrinus died; and the son could not forbear measuring the length and breadth of his beloved father, and casting up the amount, before he went about the operation. When he knew the vast reward of his pains, he began the work. But lo, when he had anointed the body, according to the prescription, the corpse moved, and Renatus in a fright broke the vial!

To close the subject, let me inform your readers, from my own experience, that the recollection of a dutiful behaviour to departed parents affords a richer and dearer pleasure than all that a large inheritance can bestow.

C.

No. 30. May 18, 1815.

Reading Necessary in Order to Good Conversation.

I am not without some apprehensions that, between my correspondents and myself, the Mountaineer may assume too uniform a face of fault-finding and satire.

"Let them hate, provided they fear me," is a sentiment which will never agree with my feelings. Indeed it is a motto fit only for tyrants, who wish to inspire terror, because a life of terror is their own just and dismal portion.

The following letter is chiefly made up of strictures upon a class of my readers for whom I profess a very high and affectionate regard; I mean the young ladies. But they will soon perceive that it comes from no unfriendly pen; that it aims not to vex them, but to do them good. It is my own decided opinion that the women of the present day are worthy, and more than worthy, of the men. May both sexes diligently exert themselves in the race of improvement.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

To one who knows the delight and benefit which are afforded by a well written book, it must be painful to see that there are many persons who deprive themselves of the advantages resulting from a habit of reading. I am pleased with your endeavours to excite a more general taste for literature, and I believe you have in some measure succeeded. But what a lamentable deficiency in this respect still exists! I am sorry there is so much of it amongst the young ladies. The perplexing situation in which I often find myself, when in their company, induces me to send you this letter, hoping that it may tend to diminish the evil of which I complain.

As you will readily believe, sir, of a youth just out of his teens, I sincerely value the society of those "whom man was born to please." But I frequently experience great difficulty in conversing with them. The reason of this I was for some time at a loss to discover; but have at last been compelled to think that the fault is on their side, and not on mine. A woman may behave herself with good manners, and have a turn for wit as well as a vivacity of spirits; and yet, if her mind is not furnished by reading for rational

conversation, it is impossible that she should afford much entertainment to men of sense and reflection. I do not pretend to any uncommon depth of understanding; nor do I wish to spend my social minutes, especially with the ladies, in puzzling disquisitions. But then, neither am I disposed to waste time, as many of our beaux do, by chatting with the girls hour after hour about nothing. Indeed, it is to me a knotty piece of business to feel obliged to talk when there is no subject in hand. And when I start a subject, I am in danger of being soon thrown most mortifyingly out of the chase. For instance, I have asked a lady what she thought of *Lucilla;* not once supposing that she could have neglected so popular a work as *Coelebs*. 'Lucilla,' said my fair companion, 'who is she? Where does she live?' And when I inquired, with surprise, whether she had not read Coelebs; she replied in the negative, and seemed quite unconcerned about it. But when I told her it was *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, 'O,' said she, 'I should be very glad to see it. Where shall I get it? What sort of man was Coelebs, and what sort of wife did he get? What was the bride's wedding dress?'

But I would not be understood to insinuate that all our young ladies are thus careless about reading. This is not the case. I am acquainted with some who do read; and when I fall into their company, (unless our tastes are as different as those of Coelebs and the grown children whom he met with in his first visit,) we have something to engage our minds, and can fill up conversation pleasantly, without even once verging toward the borders of nonsense or scandal.

Many of the girls, I am afraid, are so much occupied with what they think the necessary business of setting off their persons, that they spare no time for improving their minds. Now though I am anxious that they should read, both for their own sakes and mine, I do not pretend, with some, that beauty has no charms for me. No; with your friend William

Meriton, I am sensible enough of the attraction of personal beauty; but surely it is not the main thing with which to be pleased. I wish your young female readers would frequently contemplate William's picture of his Emily, and take her for a pattern. Her character is an excellent one, and ought to be imitated. What an amiable simplicity was conspicuous in her discourse, her manners, and her dress! By the by, I am glad to see that she would not have her ears bored; a practice which I have always considered equally savage and absurd. But above all, let her piety be copied; that fervent piety which reigned in her heart, and infused itself into all her thoughts, words, and actions. How delightful to find, in this frivolous world, such a woman as Emily was, devoting herself, in the very bloom of youth, to the service of God, and "clothed with the Christian garb of genuine humility!" Emily loved reading too, without which she could not have shone in wisdom and goodness with so much lustre as she did. Let not the girls, then, be so taken up with decorating their persons as to leave their better part uncultivated. For,

"What's female beauty but an air divine,
Through which the mind's all-gentle graces shine?
They, like the sun, irradiate all between;
The body charms, because the soul is seen.
Hence men are often captives of a face,
They know not why, of no peculiar grace:
Some forms, though bright, no mortal man can bear,
Some none resist, though not exceeding fair."

YOUNG.

Of what advantage, I ask, is the mere beauty of shape and feature, if those graces do not exist in the soul? Do my countrywomen say that it will gain them admirers? True, it may. But let me assure them that admirers who may be caught by this sort of beauty are poorly worth catching. Let the girls, I say again, imitate Emily. Whether handsome or not, let them become amiable and respectable; and their prospects

of obtaining good partners for life will be much improved. Partners for life, I repeat; for I am not speaking to those giddy, unfeeling coquettes who make a trade of conquering and vexing our hearts merely for the sport's sake.

There are few girls amongst us who can justly plead that they have no time for reading. They may not be able to devote themselves entirely to their books; nor is it in any view desirable that they do so. But if reading were as dear to them as I wish it to be, they would contrive to redeem a little time every day for an employment so delicious and so useful. As time is precious, great care should be taken to select and to read works of merit only. I know some young people, and some old ones too, who are fond of reading, but read to no good purpose, for want of a right taste and judgment in the choice of books. They are like the baby ladies already alluded to, who told Coelebs they had read *Too Civil by Half, the Fortunate Footman, the Illustrious Chambermaid*, &c, Such trash, including at least nineteen twentieths of the whole mass of novels, is so far from mending the heart or the understanding that it grievously injures them both. No one passionately addicted to these idle, chaffy fictions, has ever been known to exhibit either firmness of intellect, or vigorous and steady activity in discharging the incumbent duties of life. Instead of such destructive poisons, permit me to recommend the numerous *Writings of Miss Hannah More*, for improvement in religion and morals; and for elegant and not unprofitable entertainment, the *Works of Miss Edgeworth*.

The censures which I have expressed might with great propriety be turned upon a large proportion of our young men also. Their taste for reading, I apprehend, is scarcely either stronger or better formed than that of the ladies. Wishing you all success in your enterprise, I am, Mr. Mountaineer, yours,

C. PHILOMATHES.

No. 31. MAY 25, 1815.

Picture of a Modern Fop.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

SIR,

I HAVE been for a long while wondering that you have never lifted your pen to chastise a tribe of beings who make very pestilent inroads upon the comfort of society; namely, our village and country foplings. Probably your forbearance has proceeded from contempt. But this feeling must not actuate us all. If our abodes be infested with vermin, they ought to be routed. "A necessary act incurs no blame;" and the assumed elevation of the sons of vanity should no more protect them from the expression of our scorn than the splendid station of the ugly, creeping animal which Burns espied on "the towering top of Miss's bonnet" exempted it from censure. Permit me then to aid you a little in the laudable work in which you are engaged, by dropping you a few dashes of my plain, clumsy pencil, with the view of furnishing you, and through you the public, a picture of that disgusting and despicable creature, the modern fop.

For this purpose I shall attempt the portrait of Lewis Q. Z. Bubble, one of the fashionables of the day; as his characteristics will be found to represent those of much the larger class of the individuals who come under the general appellation of fops or coxcombs. His father was rich, but immoral, moving in splendour, and rioting in all the excesses of folly and gay licentiousness. At an early age, Lewis was initiated into the genteel vices of high life. He was sent to school; but the reins of discipline were snatched from the hands of the preceptor, and thrown loose upon the neck of the boy. His pockets were filled with dollars, which he was encouraged to spend in pleasure; but peremptorily denied the privilege of squandering, (to use the phraseology of his parents,) in charitable offices, unless when a trifling donation could be

made to ensure the fame of generosity. Instead of his studies, he loved fine clothes, cards, balls, wine, and the midnight carouse. And he soon became the theme of many a quilting and tea party; one of the favourites of the pretty, independent misses of the first circle. The elegance of his bow, or rather nod; the careless, open ease of his countenance, particularly at entering a room which contained dignified strangers and venerable personages, before whom mere bookworm youngsters were diffident, silent, and awkward; the free thinking air with which he could ridicule the gloomy seriousness of religion, and laugh at the humdrum restrictions of morality; the polished activity with which he wound through the mazes of the dance; and the gracefulness of his manner and attitudes in handing beverage to the ladies around the hall; these, and many other such, were the qualifications which drew forth the eulogiums of the flippant belles on the youthful beau, and excited his ambition to leave his compeers behind. In these accomplishments he is still an adept; but to them there are many others added, equally requisite for placing him at the very summit of the ton. Boasting of his unrestrained liberty, he is enslaved by the most tyrannical and degrading corruption. Nocturnal profligacy contaminates and debases all the affections of his heart, and all the powers of his mind. Swearing has become so habitual to him that all his conversation, no matter what the subject, or to whom addressed, is interlarded with profanity. Drinking freely has also become an item in his scheme of regimen. And on occasions in which the beneficence of Heaven beams upon our country, and calls for the grateful homage of pure and cheerful hearts, he thinks, or pretends to think it, if not praiseworthy, at least very pardonable, to brutalize his nature by intoxication, which he and his associates are pleased to denominate the altitude of festivity. It is one of the fundamental maxims by which his conduct is regulated, or more truly,

divested of regulation, to act regardless of the opinions of all persons but those of his own coterie. Manliness of spirit is confounded with licentiousness in his vocabulary.

But that you and your readers may be the better able to recognize Mr. Bubble, should you meet him in your walks, I will here describe him to you, as he now presents himself to my eye in a neighbouring porch, of which my window commands a view. He inclines already, not a little, to corpulence, the effect of idleness and luxury. His complexion shows a blooming wine flush, while the bloated rotundity of his cheeks evidently proves that they have never been consumed by the midnight vigils of anxious meditation. He has a proud carriage; a stalking, lofty strut, which seems almost to disdain the world on which he treads. And sometimes, particularly when he is satisfied there is no danger of his having to encounter resolute opposition, he puts a bullying swagger into his voice and gait; accompanied by the dexterous swing of his bludgeon, a badge of gentility without which he seems incapable of sitting, standing, or locomotion. By these manoeuvres the humble crowd are so deeply awed that they leave a wide space to his occupancy; and choose rather to move around him at a distance, and at the expense of trudging through the mire, than to expose themselves to the jog of his bended elbow, or the sweep of his leg or cane. His neck is intrenched in as many cravats as Hector's shield was in stratums of bull's hide. His whiskers, to which the comb and the brush are applied regularly every half hour, and which are contemplated fully as often in the glass, run in flowing hedges from his ears to the point of his chin, where they terminate for want of more soil in which to cultivate their prolongation. These vast garnishments of his upper story are happily supported by the projection of his double-deep, snowy ruffles; which I now see fluttering like streamers in the gale; and now

they are concealed from my view by the volume of cloudy perfume that pours from his lips, while they relax their pressure on the burning cigar. There hangs from his fob a huge golden chain, to which is appended a prodigious bunch of keys, trinkets, and seals, whose reflections in the sun vie in lustre with the blaze of a nabob's equipage. The whole figure, taken together, exhibits a grandeur from which even the epic muse might imbibe inspiration. And I may safely add that nothing in all the science of motion can exceed, in beauty and taste, the mode in which he throws back from his mouth the little roll of fragrant weed; turning out the palm of his hand, and gently holding between the two fingers next to the thumb the roll aforesaid, while he blows before him, into the lap of the playful breezes, its undulating, spiral furnes. I have heard it asserted, not incredibly, that he acquired the art of doing this thing so well by dint of many a long hour's practice before a mirror. So mighty is the force of a ruling passion!

But the character which I have undertaken to delineate has still other features deserving our notice. I must, therefore, defer to a future time the completion of my picture; when it shall be animated with a little more of the intellectual expression of the original, and receive the last touches of

C. JACK DAUBER.

As I think my friend Jack to be something much above a dauber, I hope he will finish his striking portraiture as early as his convenience will allow. A pencil like his should be often in action.

No. 22. JUNE 1, 1815.

On a Desire to do Good.

IT is a truth too evident to be denied, that folly and vice and misery rule the world in which we live.

But it is our consolation to know that they rule not unresisted nor unchecked. There are other powers at work in the affairs of men, besides the wicked, perverse passions of our depraved nature; powers characterized by goodness, indefatigable in exertion, and which shall at length completely prevail.

In surveying the scene before him, the philanthropist finds reason to be grateful for the appointment of divine providence, that while we pursue our own interests with ordinary prudence and honesty, we are in various ways accommodating and benefiting one another. Lawful commerce, in all its extent, rests upon the principle of mutual advantage. But I wish to bring into view, and recommend to my readers, a far more excellent principle; I mean that of fervent, active benevolence. I am thinking of the heart which feels strongly and steadily for the welfare of others; whose habitual language, expressed much more in actions than in words, indicates an unquenchable thirst for disinterested usefulness. Such was the heart of the great Howard, and such the pursuit in which he died a martyr. But we have a still higher model. It is recorded of our Saviour and our Master that he "went about doing good." He made the sublimest beneficence the business of his life. He did not shun the occasions of relieving distress, as we too often do; he did not indolently wait for their occurrence; he sought them with inextinguishable ardour; and amidst trials and sufferings beyond all example, he placed his joy in the giving of joy to guilty, wretched man. And let it be remembered, that our only evidence of being his disciples is that we possess a portion of his spirit and character.

I seem to myself to overhear the secret communings and inquiries of a benevolent heart. 'What can I do, as an instrument in the hand of ALMIGHTY LOVE, toward mending the state of things around me? I see much of deplorable ignorance, much of pernicious error; what can I do for promoting the knowledge of

truth? I see ungodliness and iniquity dreadfully abounding, by which the rational nature of man is degraded, and the glory of God eclipsed; what can I do for advancing the interests of religion and virtue? I see pain and sorrow, in a thousand forms, overspreading the earth; what can I do for their removal, or alleviation? O that the Greatest and Best of beings would give me some share, however small, in the sacred, glorious work of reforming and blessing the world!' Here is a wide field open for zealous activity; a field in which every talent, even the weakest, may find its appropriate place and utility. Our mental faculties and improvements, our influence in society, our wealth, our example, our prayers to Heaven, all have ample scope for employment, with the animating prospect that they will not be employed in vain.

We are too apt to sit still, and amuse ourselves with splendid visions of the good we would do, had we other and larger furniture than that with which it has pleased God to endow us. For instance, I find myself sometimes internally exclaiming, O for the style of a Junius, to arrest and fix the attention of the most heedless; the reasoning powers of a Paley, to fasten conviction upon the most perverse! O for the fancy and the fire of a Patrick Henry, the energy of irresistible eloquence, to kindle in the coldest bosom the celestial flame of charity! But it is dangerous to indulge the mind in these visionary rambles. It cherishes in our breasts an unbecoming despondency, or leads us to murmur at the allotments of infinite wisdom; and is frequently made the base pretext for selfishness and sloth, while every thing around calls for the most generous and unwearied efforts in the cause of humanity. Our duty is to inquire what can be done with the very means afforded to us, and to do it promptly and perseveringly. Even the slenderest means, faithfully improved and used, shall not fail of their reward from the gracious Patron of every good endeavour; to whom we are to render our final ac-

count "according to what we have, and not according to what we have not."

With those who aim at the promotion of the best interests of mankind the Mountaineer puts in his humble claim of association. Will it be permitted me to say a few words concerning myself, my views, and expectations? They shall be words of soberness, uttered in simplicity and sincerity of heart. Of the merit of my essays, no competent judge, I am sure, forms a more moderate opinion than I do; I see their defects, both in matter and manner, without being able to remedy them. Could I command greater strength of thought and beauty of expression, I would most cordially devote them to the service of my readers. Full well am I aware that I ought not to provoke nor to defy criticism; as in these little compositions the critic might doubtless find much to censure. But of the consciousness of right intentions I trust that I can never be deprived. I wish to avoid giving offence to any human being. It is my care never to write a line "which, dying, I should wish to blot." And I hope, moreover, that my lucubrations have something more to plead for themselves than mere harmlessness; that they may be positively beneficial, in some degree, to those who are pleased to read them with attention and candour. Otherwise, I should certainly desist at once from my labours.

Let me give way, for a few moments, to conjecture upon this subject. Of ten persons who receive the Farmer, one half, I suppose, do not read the Mountaineer at all. They have long ago discovered that I do not furnish the party politician either with arguments or sarcasms; that I do not teach the eager hunters of office and power how to pull their adversaries out, that they may push themselves in; that I cannot give instruction, (I am sorry for it,) in agriculture, the great source of all earthly prosperity; that I know nothing of mercantile affairs, nor can throw one ray of light upon the system of trading in horses and cattle.

Yet those people may have the good nature to consider that the editor of a newspaper has a variety of tastes to gratify, and that things which are indifferent to one may be acceptable to another. Four of the supposed ten, perhaps, read these pieces without any lasting effect; pronouncing them sometimes excessively grave, sometimes dull, and sometimes superficial. But the tenth person, it may be, obtains from the Mountaineer the correction of some error in sentiment, the knowledge of some useful truth unperceived before, the expulsion of some silly or vicious propensity, the commencement or the riveting of some impression favourable to piety and good morals. And here I find my reward; a reward which abundantly compensates all my toils, and urges me to go forward with increasing alacrity.

I have already received some assistance which I value; but I feel the inadequacy of my own resources more and more sensibly. And therefore I take this occasion to renew my request to those disciples of true wisdom who possess habits of connected thought and of writing, that they will enter into my design, and aid me in my work. I ask it not merely as a boon to myself, to give additional dignity and variety to this paper: I ask it as a kindness to the public, in the name of the best principle by which the heart of man can be actuated, the principle of universal benevolence.

No. 33. JUNE 15, 1815.

Advice to a Tradesman.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

SIR,

THIS comes to you from a tradesman who commenced business a few years ago. I have reason to believe that my character is well esteemed by my neighbours, and have as much custom in my line as

I could desire. My advancing prosperity I ascribe, in a very large measure, to the care of the good and judicious master with whom I served my apprenticeship; and particularly to a letter which he wrote to me on my marriage and settlement. I send you a copy of this letter, to be inserted, if you think proper, in one of your numbers; hoping that it may prove as useful to those of your readers to whom it applies as it did to your obedient servant,

THOMAS TRUSTY.

DEAR THOMAS,

It gives me much pleasure to learn that you have married an industrious, worthy girl, of an honest family, and that you have set up a shop for yourself. While you were under my control, you gained more than a common share of my good will by your diligence, fidelity, and orderly behaviour. You have seen this, I trust, in my conduct towards you before you left me. And I would now farther testify my concern for your success and happiness, by sending you some rules of action, the importance of which I have ascertained by the experience and observations of a long life. I hope you will accept them as a proof of my friendship, and be benefited by reducing them to practice.

My first direction is, be assiduous in your calling. Sloth is a sly, pernicious deluder, against which I exhort you to guard with the utmost vigilance. Should you forsake your shop, to lounge about taverns and places of amusement, every thing would soon go downhill with you. If you have apprentices, you cannot do justice to them, nor can you reasonably expect them to serve you with faithfulness and zeal, without your constant eye, your instructions, and your example. Idleness is the parent of many a vice. It has plunged multitudes into gaming, drunkenness, and all the corruptions of bad company.

In the next place, be punctual to your engagements.

I wish you to make it a principle to be as seldom and as little in debt as your circumstances will permit. Be cautious about promising money at a specified day. But when you have set a day for payment, let nothing be wanting which the most strenuous exertions can supply to make your promise good. This punctuality will give you credit, and open resources to you on every necessary occasion. If you pass your word to pay money as soon as you can get it, let it be seen that you do labour to get it and pay it as early as possible. Beware of laying out the money which ought immediately to satisfy just claims upon you in new schemes and projects, however flattering they may appear. To do so is iniquitous, and cannot finally prosper. Use the same caution, also, in your promises for the delivery of work, and be equally exact in your fulfilment of them. Let it be your steady rule, barring unforeseen accidents, which will sometimes occur, and for which reasonable people will make allowance, to be ready at the hour appointed. This is a thing of great importance to your business. People soon become disgusted with the man whom they find trifling with his word, undertaking more than he can perform, and telling his customers that they must come again. They naturally forsake such a man; and resort, even at a longer distance, to him who is known never to sport with the obligations he has assumed.

Execute your work well.—Every man who wants an article, wishes it, of course, to be good in its kind. By doing your work slightly, you may, indeed, get through more in a given time; but it is a policy as foolish as it is fraudulent. The public soon find out the deception; your character is destroyed, and your shop abandoned with just indignation.

Let your prices be moderate.—The ordinary competition, I acknowledge, settles the value of skill and labour; for I do not know any standard by which to estimate the worth of any vendible thing whatever but its common price in a fair market. Yet you will

sometimes find cases in which honour requires you to resist a temptation to overreach the ignorant, or to take advantage of the necessitous. If you have little or no competition around you, observe the rule of moderate charges for the sake of conscience and a good name.

Live frugally.—This precept may at first seem harsh and unpleasant; but prudence renders your submission to it indispensable. I do not say, live stingily and meanly, but frugally; that is, let your house, your furniture, your dress, your table, and every thing about you, be plain and simple, calculated for substantial use, not for parade and the indulgence of luxury. A young tradesman, setting out in life with a small stock, will become an object of ridicule, and bring upon himself many inconveniencies, if he vie in his domestic arrangements with his rich neighbours. This weak ambition is apt to make him dislike the business of his shop, to throw him far into debt, and expose him to poverty all his days. I hope you will strive to live considerably within your income; that you may be providing for the education of your children, if children shall be given you; for the infirmities of your declining years, and for the calls of charity. It will be time enough to gratify expensive tastes, if they be justifiable ones at all, when you shall have arrived at the possession of affluence.

I have reserved the most weighty rule for the last, as it is that which must give energy and efficacy to all the rest. Fear God, cleave to his gospel, and obey his commandments.—"Vanity and vexation of spirit" are inscribed upon every human pursuit from which God is excluded. Keep your own heart, then, and guide your family, so far as in you lies, in the paths of "pure and undefiled religion." This will bring down a blessing from heaven upon your labours. It will ensure to you that inward peace of mind which is infinitely more to be coveted than wealth and honours, and which will support you under every trouble and disappointment in this changing world.

I think I have marked out for you, in a few words, the way to a useful, respectable, and happy life; and what is better still, to a joyful entrance into eternity. That you may do well here, and inherit your portion among the righteous hereafter, is the earnest prayer of, dear Thomas, your old friend,

JOHN UPRIGHT.

No. 34. JUNE 22, 1815.

Picture of a Modern Fop, Continued.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

SIR,

WITH the beams of your approbation playing round my head, I feel encouraged to resume the brush, and make a bold exertion to give the finishing touches to the portrait of Lewis Q. Z. Bubble. But here I must pause a moment, and sigh that no share was given to me of that genius which enlivened the pencil of a Reynolds or a Hogarth. For indeed the task which I have prescribed to myself is more difficult than I had supposed; and to be masterly executed, would require a head that could comprehend the analysis of a bubble, and a hand that could sketch the form of inanity. My promise is out, however; I am stationed at my palette, and must go on.

Let it not be apprehended from what has been said of Lewis that he devotes no part of his time to reading. The fact is so far otherwise, that of such things as please him he has read a great number. Indeed he possesses a large library of select books. Some of them, being peculiarly choice productions, are committed to the safe-keeping of his trunk, except when they are in the hands of himself or his intimate associates. None but the most perfectly initiated have the privilege of seeing these extraordinary treasures; and none should dare to open them who are not bent upon utter destruction. But in the catalogue of his

more visible books, setting aside a few scientific volumes, which he displays on his chimney-piece for deceptive purposes only, there is not one to be found which bears the impress of piety or virtue, not one which they do not emphatically condemn. The front-rank champion in his literary battalia, and the standard of his sublimest morals, as well as the august prototype of all his elegant graces, is the renowned Chesterfield. Shrink back, ye little sparks of reason, learning, and religion; ye Miltons, Boyles, Lockes, Newtons, and Addisons; and hide your twinkling rays behind this refulgent luminary of modish grandeur. At an humble distance, observe his march through courts and palaces; and admire his planetary retinue of lords and ladies, libertines and courtezans. Who would not be proud to be a disciple of him who was the idol of nations, and on whom the intellectual colossus, even the mighty Johnson, has pronounced this highly appropriate eulogium, that his writings "teach the morals of a prostitute, and the manners of a dancing master?" Next to Chesterfield, appears a host of licentious novels; and then a long file of still more licentious poems and plays. Here are found the materials which chiefly occupy our hero's reading hours, and enable him to instruct and enrapture the rising Chesterfields of the day. In one corner of his book-case are deposited the sceptical writings of Bolingbroke and Hume. These he reads but little, as their disquisitions are too metaphysical and intricate to comport with the fluctuating frivolity of his thinking habits. He merely dips into them occasionally, to obtain a smattering of their sophistry. The impious sarcasms of a Voltaire, and the coarse blasphemies of a Paine, are more level to his capacity and his taste. Their ribaldry, therefore, he imbibes with the utmost avidity. These are the physicians who furnish him an opiate to lull the agonies of his conscience; the glorious teachers who supply him with means to fortify, with the flimsy semblance of plausibility, the

outrageous banter which he hurls against virtue, religion, and truth. Hence his very presence excites a feeling of horror in all serious bosoms. Not that they have any dread of his power to undermine their principles, or their expectations of immortal felicity; but they loathe his foul, poisonous breath, streaming forth in bitter revilings against whatever they esteem most dear and venerable. By the side of his infidel works he has crammed an arm-load of inflammatory pamphlets, written by the scribblers of his own sect in politics. These also, though he does not comprehend above one half of their contents, he devours with gluttonous rapacity. For they are the nutriment of that party venom and rancorous animosity which find a congenial soil in minds such as his; minds given up to the tempests of passion, narrow and factious in their range of inquiry, not softened by benevolence, and altogether destitute of the expanded liberality of those generous spirits who do not cease to love a brother because he cannot bring his political opinions to a coincidence with their own.

Lewis is both a wholesale and retail dealer in scandal. He is a prince among whisperers and backbiters; the most eager of the crew to give currency to defamatory tales concerning the wise and the virtuous. He takes a malicious pleasure in frequenting those places where slanderous reports are most espiously fabricated and set in motion; and never fails, in his repetition of them, to strengthen them by the most artful exaggerations, when this is deemed necessary to their success in the demolition of the character against which they are directed. And when the full cry of persecution is up, and the hunted, bleeding reputation is straining for life, he is sure to be the headmost of the pack, and the first that inflicts the wound intended to be fatal. Not even the pure snows of vestal fame are left unstained by the ferocious prowler. Several times has he been made to stand before the tribunals of his country, to atone for these diabolical

practices; but by his own craftiness, and by those heavy fees for which some ingenious lawyers will plead any cause whatever, he has hitherto escaped the severe punishment due to his crimes.

This cruel being,—let it not be thought incredible, for it is easily explained,—is sometimes an attendant on religious worship. For what purpose? Not to influence others to what is right by his example. Not to catch from the holy altar the flame of devotion. Not to expose, unarmed, the base propensities of his heart to the thunders and lightnings of divine eloquence; for all his energies are shamelessly and obstinately reared up as a rampart against the shafts of truth. His object is to deride the offices of the sanctuary. Every look, gesture, and expression of him who is wielding the armour of heaven to reach and reform the soul of the impenitent sinner is watched, with malignant scrutiny, for something which may be turned to the injury of the preacher, and of the sacred cause in which his zeal is enlisted.

Many more features might be transferred to my canvass from the original. But it is needless; and the employment is become so irksome to me that I will continue at it no longer. I shall lay aside my brush and colours, after dropping a word of advice to those who honour my performance with their inspection; namely, that they do not identify themselves with the picture, nor with any part of it, unless they be conscious that it presents their own similitude.

C. JACK DAUBER.

No. 35. JUNE 29, 1815.

On Sacred Music.

AS I am a lover of music, and convinced that it is in no other way so appropriately used as in the praises of our Creator and our Redeemer, I cannot without pleasure observe the extensive cultivation of psalmo-

dy in this valley. Some relish for sweet sounds, and some capacity for singing, are the common gifts of nature to mankind; but it is of great importance, especially for producing good harmony, that the voice be well disciplined, and that a habit be acquired of performing with accuracy of time. These qualifications are to be obtained by a little study, with a course of practice under the guidance of a skilful teacher.

The pleasure, however, which I have expressed is much diminished when I consider the kind of music now generally taught in our schools. My pretensions to musical taste, I freely acknowledge, are not very high; and if I err, I wish to be convinced of my errors. In the mean time, I shall take the liberty to lay my notions upon the subject, such as they are, before the learners, and particularly the teachers, of sacred music.

I avow myself an admirer of the ancient sort of psalmody in preference, nay, I am obliged to say, in opposition to the new. In many other cases our inventions are improvements; but in this I believe we are going deplorably backward. Those for whom I write will readily understand what I mean by ancient psalmody when I mention, as specimens of it, the *Old Hundredth Psalm*, *Coleshill*, *Mear*, and *St. Martin's*. If there is any other composition, for the voice or the organ, equal in sublimity to the *Old Hundredth*, I shall rejoice to be made acquainted with it. The new psalmody may be sufficiently characterized by naming *Ocean*, *Montgomery*, *Sherburne*; with a general reference to the ballad tunes, vamped up with accompanying parts, and applied as the vehicles of religious sentiment. Things of this kind have nearly banished the venerable, heart-affecting psalmody of our forefathers from our places of instruction, and are aiming to expel it even from our worshiping assemblies.

The first requisite to a good piece of music is a good air, or leading part. Now it seems to me that

most of the airs so fashionable in our schools betray no less than a most egregious poverty of genius. They have some variety of movement, but no energy. I hear a wild, flashy series of sounds, which express nothing, and excite in my mind no feeling but that of weariness or disgust. And when I think of the composers of so much unmeaning noise, I am apt to be reminded of the poet mentioned by Horace, who wrote two hundred careless verses while he stood upon one foot; or of Bayes in the Rehearsal, who played many a fantastic trick in order to "elevate and surprise." But I have other objections, and such as are more capable of being reduced to a specific form.

There is a superficiality, a levity in much of the new music, quite unsuitable to the grand purpose of psalmody, which is the excitation of a devotional spirit. Many people say that they are vastly entertained by these tunes, and call them pretty, very pretty. But I appeal to experience when I assert that they are far from promoting that lowly prostration of soul, and those pure affections, with which we ought to approach the throne of the Deity. I have known this ranting sort of music to produce a very presumptuous familiarity with the Almighty, and other objects the most awful; but this I call fanaticism, and not devotion.

My strongest objection, however, is leveled against the fugue. I take the term as it is commonly used amongst us, and need not explain it. In performing music with instruments, or in singing it for recreation without words, a fugue may be unobjectionable. But a vocal concert, especially a sacred one, in which two, three, or four different sets of words are to be sung together at the same time is truly such a farrago of confusion and absurdity, that I can only gaze with astonishment at the vogue which it has obtained. You tell me, perhaps, as I have often been told, that the harmony of the music is charming. Be it so; what is this to the purpose? I observe, by the way, that the placing of notes above one another so as to make to-

lerable harmony of sounds is a very mechanical and easy task. But in the name of sense, what becomes of the desirable harmony of thought and feeling in those who execute or those who hear this newfangled jumble? I once asked a little fellow who was humming his crotchets as he marched to the school, how many parts of music they carried on there? He replied shrewdly, 'let me try to recollect how many scholars we have; for we carry on about that many parts; I think, not less than twenty.' This, no doubt, created a horrid jargon of sound; but as to the intellectual and moral part of the business, it was only advancing the principle of the fugue to its utmost perfection.

I would not be understood as condemning every thing besides the grave, plain tunes. These, indeed, I prize as the best; and I should hardly give my consent to the introduction of any others in the ordinary course of public worship. But there are many pieces, not so simple, yet composed in something of the same spirit, productions of real talent, and free from the tormenting fugue, which afford me much pleasure. Such are the works of *Madan*, and many of those of *Billings*.

Since the days when I learned to sing, the angular notes have been generally introduced into our books of sacred music. These notes, at first view, present an uncouth and disagreeable appearance to the eye; but habit soon renders it familiar: and I am satisfied that by this scheme the labour both of the teacher and the scholar is very considerably lessened. Still it is questionable whether the scheme has, on the whole, been productive of good. It has been made to operate unfavourably, as I apprehend, upon the taste of the community. As it increases very much the difficulty of transcribing music, the printing of it has been proportionally called for, and has extended abundantly beyond its former amount. Almost every year, some little singing master throws out his husky, insipid collection from the press; containing, as a matter of course, some of his own miserable compositions. By

this means, huge quantities of trash, which might otherwise have perished almost in the birth, gain a longer existence and a wider range of circulation; a fresh instance of the mischiefs which result from the abuse of the glorious typographic art. But these people put my patience to the severest trial when I find them laying their irreverent hands upon the noble music of ancient times, to mangle and ruin it, every one according to his own wretched fancy, by their pretended improvements.

I have expressed my thoughts upon the new music freely; but they are thoughts not hastily formed. If any one partial to that music will furnish me a well written defence of it, I promise that it shall have a ready admission into this paper. He may use as much freedom as I have indulged: I only reserve the right of maintaining my own opinion, if it shall remain unaltered.

No. 36. July 6, 1815.

Improvement of Manners in the Valley.

Mr. Mountaineer,

HAVING observed that neither you nor any of your correspondents have hinted at the great change which this section of the country has undergone of late years in regard to manners and customs, I send you the following little sketch upon that subject, hoping that it may animate the friends of reform to make still greater advances.

I shall not spend time in explaining, and perhaps I have not the ability to explain, how it comes to pass that a new era may be said to have commenced in many parts of the valley. The fact, that such a thing has taken place, is certain and manifest. Formerly we were far behind the people on the eastern side of the Blue Ridge in those accomplishments which are so eminently calculated to render society agreeable, and which

possess the charm of removing that ennui of which mankind are so apt to complain. A few years since, we were a clan of sturdy, oldfashioned Christians, and thought it out of character to engage in any of the polite recreations of the age. But it is wonderful to see how much and how happily we are transformed. Attend our churches, and you will hardly credit my assertion; for they are still as full of people as they used to be. But on looking a little farther, you will be compelled to suspect that with a number, greater or less, no other motives than habit and fashion operate to bring them to the house of prayer. Some of these very regular attendants on divine service do not scruple to curse and swear cleverly, on proper occasions; and know how to spend a night very pleasantly at the card table, with a cheering bottle just at hand. The pleasures of the game, the stimulative tendency of the potation, the refined wit, together with the enlivening peals of laughter, erect a fortress around them as impregnable as the rock of Gibraltar; equally defying the assaults of Morpheus and the more insidious attacks of conscience. I do not know, Mr. Mountaineer, how you will like to hear these truths. I confide in you, however, as a foe to bigotry, and a friend to useful improvements; though it may cost you some time and deliberation to reconcile yourself to novelties which run counter to your preestablished notions. But, to return. Many of us have learned, at length, to despise the sarcastic observation of one Joseph Addison, that "it is wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots ranged together in different figures." The gaming parties amongst us are found to be very serviceable in many respects. The pecuniary gain accruing to the fortunate player hardly deserves, indeed, to be spoken of; as gentlemen always assert, even while they carefully

pocket their winnings, that so paltry a thing as money is not their object. And who can bring the veracity of a gentleman into question? But the game itself gives to the mind an acumen by no means disadvantageous toward the making of a good bargain; and produces a habit of quick and close thinking, a qualification indispensable to a finished politician.

As to our balls, it is believed that they cannot be too highly commended. People of both political parties attend them; the effect of which is that political discord is consigned to oblivion. And sure enough, this must be the source of that tender brotherly love which at this time so much sweetens the feelings of the federalists and the republicans towards each other, and in which we all have such abundant reason to rejoice. And then the dancing is one of the most rational amusements that can be; and, excepting the frequent colds and consumptions which must, in a measure, be attributed to it, one of the most conducive to health. It delights the hearts of many, also, to see some of those who are attached to the church, but who have gotten the better of their narrow prejudices, mingling freely with the enemies of religion, and capering over the floor like all the world; thus clearly evincing that they have shaken off the trammels of priestly government, and are determined to think and act for themselves without control. In fine, from the progress we are making, the time may be reckoned not very distant when we shall be connoisseurs in all the accomplishments of upper life: and then let our lowland neighbours reproach us as a set of untutored, back-country rustics, if they dare.

It quite exhilarates my spirits to compare what we are and shall be with what we were formerly. I see our beloved valley, so long debased by sober, rural virtues, now rapidly ascending, like a balloon, to the very mountain top of every thing that is free, and unrestrained, and pretty; of every thing grand, and dashing, and—fashionable. Ay, that's the thing. "Better

to be out of the world than out of the fashion," is our first, middle, and last maxim. We shall drive with the wind, regardless of far-off consequences. Whatever may betide, it is our resolution to be fashionable.

We are not suffered, I confess, to proceed in our brilliant career without vehement opposition. There are still a good many of the old-side folks, who continue obstinate, pestering us with their rebukes and remonstrances, and whom we despair of bringing over. These, and all that they can say, we intend to set at nought, so far as we may be able. Others there are who, though they are now halting between two opinions, may be expected, in due time, to throw off the shackles of their puritanical education, and assume a spirit of independence and self-government. It is to be lamented that we are as yet destitute of theatres, puppet shows, and many of the other luxuries of large commercial towns. But be assured, we are using and shall use our means and opportunities of improvement to the best advantage.

Yours,

C. SCRIBLERUS.

No. 37. JULY 13, 1815.

The Character of Eusebius.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

A FEW days ago, I attended the funeral of the venerable clergyman under whose ministry I was brought up from my childhood. The people of the vicinity were collected, in very large numbers, to commit to the silent grave the remains of their revered pastor. It was indeed a melancholy day to us all; and while the impression of it still rests upon my mind, I wish to offer an humble tribute to his memory, by giving you a sketch of his character as a preacher of the gospel. This view of him I select out of many, as I know you to be a devoted admirer of eloquence.

On the personal appearance of Eusebius I have not much to observe. It was not marked with any of those qualities which fascinate the multitude. His countenance, without being in any way a very striking one, exhibited an agreeable mixture of sound sense, gravity, and benevolence; and was frequently lighted up with an engaging smile of cheerfulness. In his dress he was neat, I may say elegant, but plain and simple. Through all the changes of fashion, he was uniform in wearing no ruffle at his bosom, nor powder upon his hair. Whether for these omissions he deserved praise or censure, I will leave to your decision.

Let me proceed to the mind of Eusebius. His genius was not of the first order, distinguished by profound, original thinking; neither did he possess great brilliancy of imagination. Yet in my opinion, in which I hope to make you agree with me, he was an instructive, interesting, and eloquent preacher. A discerning eye easily perceived that he had been thoroughly educated, and that he was a man of extensive reading and knowledge, though no man ever made less parade of learning than he did. His acquirements were discovered not by a direct, obtrusive display, but in the dignity, strength, and variety of his performances. His judgment was solid, patient, and uncommonly sure in its conclusions. He read only what was valuable, and what he read he digested well. He loved study from his youth, and pursued it diligently through life; as it was a maxim with him that the mind inevitably grows sterile by neglect, and that the speaker who would permanently hold the attention of his hearers must be constantly adding something to the stock of his materials. Besides this general, ever growing furniture of ideas, he made it a rule, except upon sudden and extraordinary calls, always to prepare himself carefully on the subject of each particular discourse: so that, instead of shallow and roving declamation, the besetting fault of extemporal speakers, he delivered thoughts that were vigorous and ap-

propriate to his theme. And this he did without embarrassment, though his discourses were neither read, nor recited verbatim from memory. His doctrine unfolded itself with great force and beauty. This resulted from various causes; namely, his clear method, his excellent style of language, and his impressive elocution. You will allow me to dwell a little upon every one of these.

His method of arranging the parts of his subject was natural and luminous, remote from all trick and finesse. The particulars were seldom more than three or four, and so bound together as to converge ultimately to one point. And the whole plan of the sermon was announced, and that very deliberately, at the beginning. Thus his auditors were enabled to follow his train of discussion and illustration with understanding; and even to recollect, with facility and profit, the substance of what they had heard. He strongly disapproved the principle, adopted by some in the present age, of preaching with a concealed method; as he thought that such preaching must lose much of its utility for want of the requisite visible order and connexion.

In regard to style, our preacher invariably chose the plainest words he could obtain to express his meaning; never using a hard or learned word but with reluctance, and through necessity. For he was anxious that the weakest hearer might not be deprived of one particle of what was spoken. Yet he would not, for the sake of plainness, descend to vulgarity. His sentences, sufficiently diversified in their structure, were rarely very long, and never involved in ambiguity. All was artless and perspicuous in the highest degree. In fact, while he was speaking, our attention was so riveted to the matter of his address that we scarcely ever thought of his style.

When Eusebius ascended the steps of the pulpit, we could see that his object was by no means to "preach himself." Every motion of his body, every feature

of his face, indicated the trembling reverence with which he approached that awfully responsible station. When he arose, his solemn but affectionate glance fixed every eye, and reduced the most careless to sobriety of behaviour. A deep sense of the majesty of God, and a lively concern for the conversion and salvation of the people, evidently occupied him during all the exercises of the sanctuary. He was always serious, always in earnest. The disadvantages of a voice rather untoward he overbalanced by an unhurried and very distinct utterance, and by a felicity of emphasis and cadence arising from unaffected feeling. His gestures were few, but spontaneous, and therefore at once pleasing and weighty. There was no lightness of carriage about him; no theatrical start; no attempt to dazzle us with wit, or amuse us with oddness and humour. No; he bore us away from thinking of him or his talents, and compelled us to regard ourselves, our sins, our duties, our Redeemer, our all-seeing Judge, and the eternity of bliss or wo which lay before us. But there were times, and these not unfrequent, when he was more than serious; when his heart melted and overflowed with the most fervent sensibility. At such a season, his lips became tremulous with emotion; his voice assumed an indescribable tenderness, and the tears streamed copiously down his cheeks; while, with eloquence truly divine, he bewailed the mad obstinacy of the impenitent sinner, and depicted his danger; or turned our view to the Son of God bleeding on the cross for our redemption; or enlarged upon the unfailing love of God to his children, and raised our thoughts to that "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" which he has reserved for them beyond the skies. I have seen hundreds weeping together under the influence of these sacred effusions. We felt as if Jesus Christ stood in the midst of us, urging and beseeching us to escape from boundless evil, and secure an infinity of good, by flying to his bosom. The impression was sometimes transient;

but not seldom it proved durable. Accompanied with the power which comes from above, these sermons produced the most salutary issue in many happy instances; affording to this faithful labourer the enrapturing prospect of a rich harvest of souls, to be his "crown of rejoicing" at the great day.

I will only add, in a few words, that Eusebius, in the church and in the world, through life and at his death, was the same character, in every thing steady and consistent. He was the example as well as the advocate of that heavenly wisdom which "is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Think what we have lost by the removal of such a pastor! But we must console ourselves by reflecting that he was long spared to us, and that our loss is his unspeakable and eternal gain.

CHRISTIANUS.

No. 38. JULY 20, 1815.

On the Borrowing of Books.

IN the mind of a man who knows the exquisite pleasure of reading, it requires no great stretch of benevolence to communicate that pleasure by lending his books to his neighbours. Accordingly, I never knew a man of this description who was not cheerfully willing to lend a book; provided only that he felt reasonably secure of integrity in the borrower. 'Integrity!' perhaps the reader will say; 'do you apply so serious a word to the small matter of borrowing a book?' I certainly do, and without hesitation. Many will think it a trifling subject; but others will thank me for endeavouring to banish a crew of bad practices, which have often put their patience to a considerable trial. I request attention to the following rules and observations.

Do not borrow a book, unless you have reason to

believe that you will take an interest in the reading of it.—It is not right to bear off my book from a momentary whim merely, and keep it weeks or months, to no purpose, out of my possession. Yet this is a fault not very seldom committed.

When you borrow a book, make a point of beginning it more early, and going through it with more industry, than if it were your own, that it may be returned the sooner.—A man of sense keeps such books only in his library as he believes worthy of being repeatedly read or consulted. When, therefore, he lends you one of these, he sacrifices one of his daily necessaries, or at least of his favourite luxuries. You do not treat him well, if you keep for a month, or perhaps several months, as people often do, a book which you might easily read and restore to his hands in a week. I have been sufficiently troubled by my neighbours in this way. You take my book with you, and occasionally read a few pages in it. Along with this, you are carrying on the reading of half a dozen other things. Month after month passes away; and you forget that I should be glad to have my book at home, though I am reluctant to ask you for it.

Take special care of a borrowed book.—I know that much use of a book, even in the most careful manner, must gradually wear it out; and this is allowed for, of course. But a man of any taste hates to see his book soiled by dirty fingers, the blank pages or margin scribbled by foolish hands, the leaves broken by being folded at the corners, or the binding shattered by negligent throws or falls. These are sore evils. You borrow from me a book which I value highly; perhaps elegant also in its paper and binding. You pick it up, and fling it down, with as little care as if it were a block of wood; and when I get it again, I find it so injured and defaced that I scruple to place it on the shelf which it formerly adorned. Sometimes I have seen, not without indignation, the most heedless children suffered to make a plaything of a book

of great merit; turning it over and tossing it about as they would an old almanac. If you choose, indeed, to have your own books transmuted to wreck and filth in such a way, I have no right to complain of it; only I may be tempted to associate you, in some degree, with my idea of a Hottentot. But when the property is mine, it is a different affair. Your telling me that you treat my book no worse than you treat yours can afford me no satisfaction; you might as well give me a blow on the face, and attempt to justify it by referring to a silly habit of beating yourself. Such unreasonable abuses as I have mentioned are so common, that it is no wonder if those who have books, and know how to value them, are found rather shy and cautious about lending them. If you have been faulty, mend your manners; and by doing so, get free access to the stores of literature which may be in your neighbourhood.

With one more direction I shall conclude. Make it a fixed rule to return your friend's book as soon as you can, after having read it.—Why should you keep it longer? Why forget to return it, when the owner is probably in want of it? The philosophy of my temper is frequently brought into peril by the laxity which prevails upon this point. It seems as if some people have made up their minds that they are under no sort of obligation spontaneously to restore a borrowed book at any time; and many others pay no attention to the doing of it for years together. I have asked gentlemen, on inspecting their libraries, how it came to pass that I saw so many odd volumes or broken sets. The answer was that the volumes wanting to complete sets had been lent to friends, and never returned; many of them so long ago that it was not remembered who the borrowers were. Sometimes the broken appearance of the library was increased by the very fault which the owner, with a kind of defensive lenity, imputed to others; namely, his having the books of other people lying on his shelves

unreturned and forgotten. If readers of this cast would prey only upon each other, they would strike something like a balance of injury. But if I lend one of them a book, I may as well give him leave to put it into the fire; unless I am willing to dun him for it, or rather to go to his house and bear my book away in my pocket as lawful prize. This I have at times been obliged to do; but it is not near so pleasant as a trip to Weyer's Cave or the Natural Bridge.

No. 39. August 3, 1815.

Stepmothers Defended.

FROM our earliest years we are taught to shudder at the idea of a stepmother. As if a stepmother must necessarily be a monster of cruelty, it seems to be agreed to brand this whole class of women with severe reproach, even to a proverb. Now, if I am not grossly mistaken, we have here an instance of prejudice unusually violent. I see no reason for such a sweeping sentence of condemnation in the present case, any more than in the cases of other large bodies of people. Doubtless there are some bad stepmothers; but I believe there are also many good ones. I shall take the liberty of telling my own experience upon the subject.

My beloved mother left, at her death, a large family of children, of whom I was the oldest. About two years after this most afflictive bereavement, it pleased my father to marry again. I had imbibed, to a wide extent, the common notions about the selfishness and barbarity of stepmothers. As I was at school, and had ceased to live at my father's, I felt not much concern for myself personally, but a very sensible degree of it for my little brothers and sister. However, I resolved to try to make the best of a thing not to be avoided. Knowing that the children were disposed to listen to me with some regard, I told them that from such acquaintance as I had with the person who was to be

placed over them, I entertained the hope of an agreeable, or at any rate, a tolerable result; and took pains to impress upon their minds the reflections and advice with which I shall, by and by, finish this paper. The amount was, that if any jarring and discord were to take place, we should be careful to prevent the fault from lying on our side. Having thus prepared ourselves for a proper behaviour as well as we could, it was still with considerable anxiety that we awaited the event.

I was not at my father's wedding; but was at his house when he brought our new mother home. Several friends, of both sexes, came with them, all in a very joyous mood. I approached, with a feeling of hesitancy, and held out my hand, saying, 'my mother, as I hope and believe.' 'Yes,' she replied kindly, 'if you will take me for a mother.' Her tone and manner won me over instantly. 'With all my heart, and I am glad to see you here as our mother.' Similar expressions ensued between her and the other children; and the covenant of mutual affection was formed, which nothing but death was to dissolve. We treated her always with willing respect; and found in her the judicious guardian, the uniform and faithful friend. There was no studying of separate interests amongst us; no sullenness nor rebellion on our part, no harshness nor coldness on hers; all was good will and harmony. She died about four years after her marriage, leaving a couple of amiable children; and between them and us the compact of brotherly and sisterly love remains in full vigour to this day.

I have made it my business to observe the conduct of stepmothers. And though I have seen some evils, and others may have happened which I could not see, yet I am satisfied that many instances have occurred of excellent stepmothers, such as my own dear second mother was.

To those young persons whom the subject may particularly concern, I now offer the following exhortations.

Do not expect more than is reasonable from a stepmother.—It is a settled maxim that we are to find human nature imperfect every where. Suppose a woman placed in one of the most trying situations of life, as that of a stepmother undoubtedly is; do you not see the absurdity of looking for the absolute perfection of conduct in her which you do not calculate upon in any other mortal? Learn to make those allowances in her case which you must make in all others; and which, slow as you may be in discovering it, you will frequently need yourselves. Learn, also, to submit to the appointment of Heaven, that in the death of a mother you have met with a loss which can never be fully repaired. You are not to reckon again on that exquisite tenderness which a mother feels towards her own offspring; as nature does not admit of its revival in any other bosom. You should be contented and thankful, if your new mother, from love to her husband, and a steady regard to duty, acts the part of your considerate and benevolent friend. To reconcile you a little more to this distinction, I will remark that I have scarcely seen any thing operate with such injurious tendency in the education of children as the strong but frequently misdirected fondness of a mothers's affection.

Take care to give no occasion or pretext for unkindness in your stepmother.—If a state of war must unhappily subsist between you and her, let it not be justly laid, as an offensive war, to your charge. Try diligently how far a respectful and friendly carriage may secure for you a corresponding return. It is easy to apply here, as in a thousand other instances, the old saying of "faults on both sides;" and it is seldom applied altogether without a warrant. But I am compelled to think that in the case we are considering the fault very often begins with the children. Listening to foolish suggestions, and greedily swallowing malignant prejudices, they look upon her who succeeds their own mother as one who has intruded into the family; an

intruder whom they are, of course, entitled to slight, to vex, and to disobey. If she has brought children with her, they are encountered with a jealous eye, as aliens and enemies. What is to be expected from such beginnings? Is a mother to abandon her little ones to your persecution? Is your father's wife to be treated with contempt by you, in her own house and station of authority? Will she not resort to her husband for support? And must he not either act basely by giving her up to your insults, or take her part, and his own too, by repressing them? In this way the mischief commences. The woman who intended to fill her difficult office with uprightness and propriety gets her temper soured, her patience unhinged, by opposition where she had a right to demand respect and candour, and after a while becomes really faulty and tyrannical under the notion of self-defence. Thus feuds and animosities divide the family into factions, and domestic peace takes her flight forever. In the mean time, the ill used stepmother is made to bear the undivided blame. The neighbourhood rings with clamour about her cruelty to a parcel of poor, motherless children, who are, as every body takes for granted, meek and innocent as angels. And many a fond, weak-headed mamma presses her spoiled child to her heart, and very confidently pronounces all stepmothers, without exception, to be little better than spirits of darkness incarnate. Judgments so senseless and wicked shall not have my concurrence. I have some trust in human integrity; and I believe there is as much of it exercised by stepmothers as by any other equal number of people exposed to equal trials.

No. 40. August 10, 1815.

A Plea for Bible Societies.

I confess it gives me pain to reflect that I have arrived at the fortieth number of my work without addressing my readers in behalf of bible societies. This omission shall lie upon my conscience no longer.

Among those glorious ideas which rarely occur, that of a bible society claims a distinguished regard; an idea inspired by the Author of all good, and destined to produce results highly beneficial to the human race. Only a few years have passed since the first institution of the kind came into being. The Christian world was electrified with joyful surprise, and excited to zealous imitation of the example. From that auspicious hour, these societies, notwithstanding the obloquy heaped upon them, have been incessantly multiplying. Their happy effects have been felt and seen in every quarter of the globe; and the sublime work continues to advance with unabated vigour, and with prospects more and more cheering to the benevolent heart. May Heaven's choicest blessings be showered down upon all who promote this best of charities with their substance, and upon all who pray for its success!

The grand, comprehensive object of bible societies is to send forth the pure, unadulterated word of God into every region of the earth. To the numerous poor throughout Christendom it is to be given freely. To the millions of the heathen nations also, until they become willing to buy it, we are to furnish it without money or price, faithfully translated into their manifold native languages. To all purchasers it is to be afforded, not as an article of merchandize, but altogether without pecuniary profit, at the lowest possible expense.

I feel it to be a task far beyond my ability to delineate the benefits which mankind have received from God, and are yet to receive, by means of the bible. The only effectual preservative of civil liberty, of peace and mutual kindness in society, is the prevalence of good morals. The only solid basis of morals is religion; and the only true and holy religion is that of the bible. In the enjoyment of the present life, multitudes are daily deriving incalculable advantages from the bible who do not aspire to a share in its future

blessings, and who are not aware of their obligations to its influence. It sets up a standard of humanity which, in some degree or other, forms and controls almost every heart. Its salutary terrors prevent thousands of crimes which would otherwise be committed. "Let it simply be asked," says Washington, "where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice?" But the dearest gifts of the bible are only bestowed upon those who cordially embrace its doctrines and submit to its laws. They derive from it principles of the most steady and triumphant virtue. It forms their tempers in the mould of universal love. It sweetens every innocent worldly pleasure, and becomes a source of other pleasures far more precious than worldly wealth or honours can afford. It supports the poor and the afflicted, under innumerable varieties of distress, with consolations beyond the reach of calamity, and hopes which elevate the soul above this terrestrial wilderness and all its gloomy scenes. Finally, the bible, as God's appointed instrument, conducts all its sincere disciples from the gates of hell to unspeakable, eternal joys in heaven. He only who can conceive the value of an immortal being, he only who can grasp eternity, is competent to estimate the full worth of the bible.

The distribution of this sacred book is not a work of sectarian party spirit. It tends powerfully to destroy that spirit, the reproach of Christian communities, by bringing Christians of all denominations to the single point in which their exertions can be perfectly united. To the bible they all appeal, as a revelation from above, the supreme, governing rule of their faith and practice. I do not see how any one who feels no concern in favour of sending the bible abroad can be a friend to religion at all. Such indifference is, indeed, only another name for downright practical infidelity, and contempt of the word of God.

But there are many who do nothing in the cause, and

yet refuse to plead guilty to so heavy a charge. I have no intention to fasten it upon any who do not deserve it. The persons to whom I allude are those who say, as an excuse for their inactivity, that they know not any people in their neighbourhood too poor to purchase a bible. I answer, perhaps you have never inquired into the matter. They who do inquire find proper objects of the charity in every corner of the land, and commonly more than they expected to find. But besides this, your pretence is founded upon a narrowness of views which is not to be justified. Who has given you a warrant to confine your benevolence within the scanty bounds of your neighbourhood? Are we not obliged, "as we have opportunity, to do good unto all men?" The object of bible societies, as above stated, is of vast extent. If you see no needy people in the circle of your acquaintance, remember that in other parts of the world there are thousands and myriads who have not the bible, and to whom it must be given, or they will perish eternally for the want of it.

It is equally futile to say, let every district, or every country, supply its own poor with bibles. This, I own, is devoutly to be wished; but alas, it is not done. Many, even in our own country, are living and dying without the bible. In some places, it is probable, there is a deficiency of the means, but in still more, of the inclination, requisite for dispersing the scriptures plentifully around. Will our childish talk remove either of these obstacles? Or are we authorized to neglect our duty because others neglect theirs? Moreover, this shallow excuse, like the former, leaves the benighted heathen idolaters, and the miserable followers of the Arabian impostor, those countless millions of our race, entirely unregarded.

I entreat my readers to lay these few observations honestly to their hearts. I call upon them to try what they can do towards instituting bible societies in their respective vicinities, wherever one is not already formed. Where this cannot be accomplished, let

them nevertheless take a share in the great work in that way which may appear to them, after careful deliberation, the most advisable.

No. 41. October 12, 1815.

The Grave of a Mother.

I have sometimes heard people boasting that they had no local attachments; that one place was like another to them, except so far as worldly convenience or profit made a difference. This, I own it, is not the case with me; I am not in this sense a citizen of the world. There are places of which the remembrance, and much more the sight, revives in my breast ideas and emotions exquisitely interesting. Indeed I cannot at all envy the cold philosophy which I have mentioned; for if it gives to its possessor an exemption from some pain, it also deprives him of a kind and degree of pleasure for the sake of which that pain may well be endured.

I have lately revisited, after a long interval, the scenes of my childhood and youth. The house in which I was born, the humble but neat and comfortable theatre of my earliest recollections, had been demolished. A few faint traces ascertained the site in our village where it had stood; and these were soon to be obliterated forever. Only three or four individuals remained in the town, of those whom I knew whilst I lived there. Some had removed, like me, far away to other climes; and many had gone to "that bourn from which no traveller returns." I sought the schoolhouse, about half a mile distant, where I had studied and played, with a host of my little contemporaries, during several of my boyish years. Our old temple of learning was no more; it had long since decayed and sunk to the earth: I could not even satisfy myself, with the full precision that I wished, what had been its situation. But every thing around

continued, quite beyond my expectation, as it used to be, unchanged through almost the third of a century: the cool, sweet fountain, issuing in rural simplicity from a rocky bank; the grove, through which we roved in search of grapes and nuts; the wide common, where we carried on our sports with fervent and ever new delight. While I looked back to those careless, joyous times, and thence pursued the series of events forward, the toils, changes, and sorrows which have fallen to my lot, I felt a strong impulse to fly, on account of the melancholy which was invading me. Yet there was something in that very melancholy so soothing, so delicious, as to chain me for hours to the place.

In another neighbourhood, a few miles from this, I passed a later portion of my youth; the season when we begin to make verses, whether we are born poets or not. Every hill and vale and rock of this endeared region I now greeted as one greets a long lost friend. The ancient occupations and pleasures of sequestered, agricultural life, with the image of many a blooming associate whom I shall see no more on earth, were restored here to my imagination and my heart, with a vividness of colouring and a force of impression which I could no where else have realized. In the midst of these fascinating rambles, I arrived at a spot the most interesting of all, my mother's grave. It lies in a lovely piece of woodland, and almost at the summit of a hill, on the side facing the east. Here the whole power of fond reminiscence rushed upon me. My tender and beloved parent, whose mortal remains I had seen deposited beneath this mould above twenty years before, seemed to present herself to my view again, in all her maternal smiles. Methought I saw once more the beaming affection of her eye, heard the accents of her melodious voice, and felt myself pressed, with all a mother's ardour, to her throbbing bosom. I fancied that we sat down together; and that I retraced and recounted to her the events of former days; the incessant labours which she sustained

for my welfare; the dangers from which her care preserved me; the example of goodness and piety which she constantly set before me; the instructions, both for this life and the next, which she inculcated upon my mind. At every step, something within me whispered the solemn admonition, 'for such blessings how deep is thy responsibility!' These meditations brought me at length to her bed of death. Never, no not even in eternity, shall I forget the hour when she bade me a long farewell. We were alone. Her speech was almost gone. My hand was fast locked in hers, and she appeared to be intensely gazing upon her first and dearest child. As soon as bursting tears would permit me to speak, I observed that we were about to lose our mother. 'Yes, my son,' she replied, 'my time is come, and I must leave you.' I inquired what were her prospects beyond the dark valley through which she was walking. In broken words, but with firmness, and a holy serenity of countenance, she said, 'I can trust my Saviour, even now. All is well; I am going to immortal glory.' In the overflow of my feelings, I immediately promised her that I would no more rest contented until I should have reason to believe myself a Christian and an heir of heaven. The dying saint and mother, with a look of ineffable sweetness, gave my hand a gentle pressure. It was most eloquent, and it was the last. Very soon afterward she became a companion of angels.

For such a parent I owe more gratitude to my God than language can ever express. I could not have lingered as I did at her grave; indeed I am conscious that I could not now write this sketch of my reflections and emotions on visiting it; did I not cherish the hope of meeting her in the world of glory where she dwells. Yes, the day is coming when I shall see her, not in imagination, but in reality. O to join her in those blissful mansions, where pain and dissolution shall be no more! In this hope I would live; and for such a fulness of joy, I doubt not that I could cheerfully die.

No 42. November 9, 1815.

The Character of Clincher Closefist.

WHAT is a miser? The great English lexicographer answers, "a wretch covetous to extremity." No explanation could be given more just or more energetic than this. Still, as every man is apt to be partial to his own definitions, I shall say that I take a miser to be a two-legged animal that hoards as much as possible, lives as meanly as possible, and gives away nothing. It is a nauseous task to fill up such an outline; but it must be attempted, in order to inspire a due abhorrence of the character. And luckily, to facilitate my work, here resides near me old Clincher Closefist, a living example of the thing. I have nothing to do but to describe him to you.

The father of Clincher was a miser before him, an idolater of gold; and transmitted the said idolatry, (the only religion he ever had,) together with a handsome beg inning estate, to this favourite son. Clincher set out in life animated with one single passion, the desire to be rich. To this point all the faculties of his soul, which are naturally far from the weakest, have been most strenuously devoted. He is capitally skilled in the making of bargains, and makes a great many. On this subject his maxim is, "all the world is a cheat, and he is a fool that has no hand in the game." To deceive the simple, to overreach even the cunning, are his constant study. He does not care for reputation; all his precaution is to keep clear of the laws against fraud. But such is his avarice that he sometimes falls into their gripe, and suffers severely for his dishonest practices; without gaining the least inward cure of his shameful propensity to make the most he can out of every body that comes in his way. No man who knows him puts the smallest confidence in his word, as to the qualities and value of any thing he has to sell. In the shaving business he has many rivals, but no equal within a hundred miles around.

When any man offers to sell him paper, he is so artful that you would think some familiar spirit must aid him in finding out the precise degree of the seller's distress; and he feels no scruple to purchase a bond at one half of its real value in a fair monied market. In lending money, he takes only legal interest, for fear of the laws against usury. But he has invented a trick for which the whole brotherhood of misers should honour him with a statue; I mean that of compelling the borrower to take off his hands, along with the money loaned, an equal or greater amount in useless horses, unsaleable cattle, or bad debts, at whatever price Clincher pleases to demand. It would require a volume to describe all his contrivances for accumulating wealth; the specimens which I have given must suffice.

Clincher is as famous for saving money as for getting it. The reason he assigns for living a bachelor to his present age of sixty is that it costs too much to maintain a wife. 'No man of sense,' he says, 'will waste his money upon such a gewgaw.' In his person, he is a moving nuisance, a spectacle the most loathsome and disgusting. No razor touches his stern, gloomy visage, except on the sabbath day. Whoever sees him wearing clean linen reports it as a phenomenon. His clothes are of the coarsest materials; so ancient and threadbare that they scarcely hide his nakedness; so begrimed with dirt and filth that it is felt as a calamity to be near him. His table is as mean as his dress; and that table he has all to himself, as he never entertains a friend, and indeed has not a friend upon earth to entertain. He eats no bread until it is a week old, as stale bread goes farther than fresh. The rest of his meal consists of such scraps and trash as no culinary ingenuity, were it applied, could render inviting to a civilized taste. His chosen dish at home is what he calls soup; that is, boiled water, thickened with crusts and garden stuff, but extremely destitute of seasoning. Now and then, however, he con-

trives to sit down to a good dinner without cost to himself; in which case he shows no dislike to the richest viands, and in point of quantity gormandizes like a wolf. His house has very much the appearance of a well tenanted pig-sty of long standing. No one gifted with the senses of seeing and smelling will ever voluntarily enter this temple of nastiness a second time. The few slaves whose destiny it is to be about him live in a purgatory of hunger, cold, and various misery. Poor creatures! It is a problem that would puzzle the acutest philosopher to tell how they keep body and soul together. While I contemplate and pity their sufferings, it is some comfort to me to reflect that those of their cruel master are unquestionably yet more severe.

But the most detestable part of Clincher is still to come. Avarice, and the habits generated by it, have made his heart as hard as the nether millstone. When he perceives an opportunity for the exercise of gainful oppression, the tears of distress touch him not; the groans and cries of the widow and the orphan have no more power to discompose his feelings, or arrest his progress, than the idle wind. And he never gives away a cent for any public or benevolent purpose whatever. You wish to make up a collection for an honest man, reduced to poverty by a fire. Clincher tells you 'he is very sorry for the unfortunate creature's losses; to be sure, there is much of misfortune in the world, and always was; but in such times as these money is very difficult to be gotten, and charity begins at home;' and he gives you nothing. You want to institute or to help a seminary of learning. He declares that 'he sees no use in learning; the world would go on about as well without as with it; especially as to latin, and greek, and geography, and all those things, he is sure they are of no account to any body;' and he gives you nothing. You are anxious to build a church for the worship of God, or to raise a stipend for the support of a pastor. He says 'the religious people are a parcel of hypocrites, and the preachers aim at nothing

but money and living at their ease; he does not think it worth while to go to church himself;' and he gives you nothing. You attempt to form a bible society, that you may send the best of books abroad freely to the poor of the land. 'For his part, he reckons that any body desiring to have a bible is able to buy one; as he keeps no bible in his own house, he does not feel bound to assist in bestowing it on other people; his money must be saved for more necessary purposes;' and he gives you nothing.

But I have to correct myself. Clincher did, some months ago, achieve an act of liberality. A public object of the highest importance was pathetically urged upon the assembled neighbourhood; and while every man and woman above the lowest circumstances were putting down their dollar apiece, our hero, who is barely worth about fifty thousand, plucked up a spirit, and gave the full sum of twelve cents and a half, hard money, all in a lump! What a blaze of benevolence must have warmed his bosom at that singular moment! And how potent must the eloquence have been which kindled such a blaze in that icy dungeon!

When Clincher began his career, he had a sort of idea how much money would make him rich. But this idea has been ever becoming more indefinite; his rage of acquisition has grown stronger and stronger to the present day. Without a wife to love, or children to provide for, he is now more solicitous, if possible, to add to his estate another fifty thousand dollars, than Howard was to alleviate the sorrows of his fellow men. With this insatiable coveting, one other passion has latterly commenced the manifestation of its symptoms in the language, features, and conduct of Clincher Closefist. A very delectable and enviable inmate forsooth it is; even the fear of perishing, one day or other, for want of the necessaries of life!

My delineation is finished. And now I fancy a generous, uncorrupted young man looking at it with a glow of indignation, not altogether free from a mix-

ture of doubt. I hear him exclaim, 'can this be a reality? Can such a terrae filius, such a monster as this, have a real existence?' Yes, my dear youth, such things have been, and such abominable things do exist. In proportion as you are filled with horror by the picture, pray and strive that you may never bear its resemblance.

No. 43. NOVEMBER 23, 1815.

A Dream.

NOT many days ago I attended the wedding of a pair of my friends. An agreeable company was collected on the occasion, sufficiently numerous for social enjoyment, without the inconveniencies of a crowd. After we had formed a circle, awaiting the solemn ceremony, only a few moments passed until a door was opened, and my Philo appeared, leading his Rosanna forward with a manly and graceful air. His face was radiant with love, and with triumph in the conquest of a heart so precious. The maid shone upon us, beauteous as spring in its prime. With her fine dark eyes bent to the ground; her cheeks now deeply suffused with a blush, and now pale as a lily; her steps timid and tottering; it was evident she could not have advanced without the tender support of her lover. In return for that support, she visibly struggled for composure, and not without some success. By the time they had arrived at the centre of the room, her countenance wore a mixture of modesty, affection, and joy, the most interesting in the world. Rising from our seats with spontaneous respect, we heard them plight their mutual faith, and joined in fervent prayer for the blessing of Heaven upon their union. The kiss of friendship now went round, and congratulations on the happy event resounded on every side. Mine were given and accepted among the rest; but a weight of sadness was already pressiug upon my spirits. It was not envy, detested passion! No; my thoughts had

flown back, and were holding melancholy communion with "the days of other years." The image of her who formerly filled my soul with gladness, my lost Julia, was presented strongly to my fancy. I remembered her charms of mind and person, with the dear confession that her heart, a heart in which every virtue delighted to dwell, was wholly mine. Such happiness as I was now witnessing seemed once to be allotted for me; it appeared almost within my grasp; I stretched my hands to seize the rich prize of my wishes; but death interposed his terrible arm, my Julia sunk into the grave, and my bright visions of earthly felicity vanished forever.

These painful reflections followed me to my pillow. I became ashamed, as a Christian, of indulging them; and strove,—for after so many years, it still cost me a strife with myself,—to feel resigned to that will which governs the universe. The battle was to be fought in which I had contended a thousand times before. But, thanks to the Giver of all good, my efforts were not made in vain; I closed my eyes in peace.

The train of my waking meditations, however, was continued in sleep; tinctured with that inexplicable wildness by which dreams are characterized. I imagined myself to be walking alone in a certain sequestered, enchanting valley, near the house where Julia had lived. It was a place in which we used to spend many a golden hour together, talking of our love; planning schemes for future life when we should be united; and sometimes conversing upon those glories which are reserved for the righteous beyond this temporary world. In my dream, every part of the scene around me seemed familiar to my sight; the tall, thick-shadowing trees, the rocks awfully projected from the sides of the lofty hills, and the clear stream, now gliding quietly along, and then thrown down a steep, broken channel with a pleasing murmur. Arriving at a favourite point on the bank, I sat down; but Julia was not with me. I thought and felt that I had not seen

her for many tedious days; but could not conjecture any reason for her absence. I said to myself, 'she preferred this spot to all others; why has she forsaken it? Here she often leaned upon my enraptured bosom, herself not less enraptured, while hour after hour rolled away; and why do I find her here no more?' In the midst of such musings as these, by which I was profoundly bewildered, a sudden light seemed to burst upon me. I lifted my eyes, and saw, at a little distance, the very angel my soul was longing for. It was Julia; but O how improved! I will not attempt to describe the character of her countenance, nor the robes of light in which she was arrayed. Hers was no longer mortal beauty firing my breast; but celestial excellence, soft and gentle as ever, yet majestic beyond expression, overwhelming me with astonishment and veneration. I tried in vain to rise and approach her. After some time, finding utterance given me, I exclaimed, 'my love, do I once more behold you? It is long, long indeed, since I saw you last. Where have you been hidden all this while, that I could not discover you?' 'Have you then forgotten that I died, that I am not now an inhabitant of your world?' These words instantaneously restored to my memory a host of afflictive ideas; the death bed of my Julia, her tender adieus, her parting sigh, the last view of her lifeless face, the grave which swallowed up all my treasure. I wept with agony. 'Yes, I had forgotten it; but alas, it is too true, I have lost you forever; and that heart which I prized above all computation beats for me no longer.' 'Peace, my friend,' she replied, 'you are still dear to me, far dearer than ever. Ours was not merely nor chiefly an earthborn love; it was that union of virtuous souls which shall be exalted and perpetuated in eternity. I am permitted,—thanks to our God for the permission,—to pay you this visit, for the purpose of giving you consolation. You wished to make your Julia happy; and as I told you in my mortal days, I relied upon you, next to Heaven, for

happiness. My severest pang in dying was that of being sundered from you. But death was my ineffable gain. All that you purposed to do for her whom you loved would have been as nothing, compared with my present exaltation in the realms of bliss. I dwell in the immediate presence of that Saviour whom we both adored beyond all earthly objects of attachment. But I cannot convey to you any adequate idea of what God has laid up in heaven for his people. You will know it when you come to partake of it. Until then, let your very love of Julia reconcile you to her early removal. Call it her release from all sin, temptation, and pain. I am commissioned to assure you also that even this event, which has cost you so many tears of anguish, was intended by infinite wisdom for your good. You are not yet to see this mystery explained; but wait patiently till the appointed time, and you shall understand it clearly. Why do you murmur against your heavenly Father, when you ought to know that, however dark are his dispensations, it is only in mercy that he afflicts you? Bow humbly to his will at all seasons; trust his promises; and know certainly that you shall praise him in strains of immortal gratitude for those strokes of his hand which prostrate you in the dust. He has taught you the way to heaven; pursue it steadfastly and zealously; aiming continually to promote his cause, and the welfare of mankind, in the station where you are placed. So shall you finish your course with joy. We shall soon meet in the paradise above; with which if you compare this retreat, once so fondly dear to our hearts, it is but as the valley of the shadow of death.—'

My Julia's words enkindled such transports of delight in my breast that I felt constrained to cry out, 'glory to God in the highest! He has done all things well. I will spend and be spent in his service; I will never more rebel against his providence. His will is always the wisest, always the best.—'So great was my ecstacy that I awoke from sleep; and behold, it was a dream.

No. 44. November 30, 1815.

On Sympathy.

Mr. Mountaineer,

THERE is in human nature a wonderful thing called the sympathy of souls. I wish to display it to your readers; but fear that I shall have little success in attempting to unfold what is so subtile and mysterious. Be that as it may, I am persuaded that the thing itself, which is rather to be felt than delineated, will be recognised by every one who is in the habit of careful and accurate observation. It is probably what we mean in general by the agreement of tastes; but I want to analyze the matter a little by descending to particulars.

In some minds there is a striking similarity in the modes of thinking; that is to say, of forming ideas and combining them together. In the intercourse of such minds, the intellectual kindred is perceived immediately and strongly. It may happen that on our entering into conversation for the first time, while you are giving me your views of some subject, I am conscious that just such have been my own thoughts. I see that we agree in starting at the same point, grappling with the same difficulties, and pursuing the same train of investigation. I even anticipate you frequently as you go along. And if I have never applied myself to the subject on which I am hearing you, I still have an impression that I should have done it in the very way that you do, had I done it at all. On the other hand, where the degrees of mental vigour are about equal, we often find as decided a dissimilarity in the modes of thought. You discuss a subject which I also have discussed. Our reasonings, I discover, are, in substance, the same, and conduct us to the same conclusion. Yet your process wears a face of strangeness to me, a kind of foreign air; and it costs me a continual exertion to follow the path in which you are leading me.

In the next place, there is a similarity in the modes of feeling. While you and I take a woodland walk, we are alike delighted with the scenes of nature, and prefer them, rude and simple as they are, to all the splendid productions of the ingenuity of man. Amidst all the bright colours which decorate the garden, we unite in pronouncing the rose far the loveliest and dearest of flowers. In reading Paradise Lost, we agree entirely that Milton's sinless Eve combines every excellence requisite to the perfection of the female character. In contrast with this, we meet with minds endowed with wisdom and culture, which feel very diversely, and even adversely, upon a thousand subjects. The visible scenes, the characters and manners, the studies and pursuits, which captivate the one are indifferent, perhaps even more than indifferent, to the other.

It is worth while to notice, also, the variety that exists in our modes of expressing our sentiments and feelings. Even where we contemplate things and are affected by them pretty much alike, there is an endless diversity in the ways which we use to exhibit what passes in our minds. Thus one is exact in his style, another loose; one is concise, another copious; one plain, another flowery and figurative.

The concords and discords to which I have adverted result in a great degree, no doubt, from education, taking that word in its most comprehensive sense. Yet I believe there is also a difference in the original structure of human minds. And this, I think, may be held in full consistency with the principle, not to be relinquished, that there is, as to all subjects of importance, a fixed standard of taste, founded in the nature of things.

Is it any contradiction to assert that while these diversities of taste give a vast interest to the general intercourse of society, which it would not otherwise possess, they often form an insuperable bar to the most intimate union of souls? To me it appears that both these propositions are true.

Have we not sometimes reflected with pleasing wonder on the speed and facility with which we made a new acquaintance? A few hours' conversation has created a freedom and confidence as entire as if it had been the work of many years; so that it seemed like a dream that we had been, until that day, utter strangers to each other. Such is the powerful effect of a lively sympathy of minds; of that coincidence which I have mentioned, in thought, feeling, and language. In other instances, we have found the acquisition of acquaintance impracticable. This has frequently been a grievance to me in the progress of life. I have wished to form a friendship with a person, of whom I not only had heard a good character, but in whom I saw much to esteem. Yet my efforts have been ineffectual. We lacked sympathy. Our ideas would not combine with sufficient readiness; nor could our sensibilities be made to tally and coalesce. Weeks and months might pass away in often and repeated communication; but an unfortunate something was perpetually interposing to keep us strangers, in spite of our mutual endeavours to know and love one another. Our esteem might grow, but tenderness would not grow in any thing like the same measure. This I take to be the meaning of a familiar saying which we frequently hear; "I respect the man highly, but I do not like his ways."

What has been said leads us, if I do not mistake, to the reason why some worthy pairs enjoy but little happiness in the married state. Their minds we may suppose to be strong, and well cultivated; their hearts warm, and enriched with excellent dispositions. To the ears of other people, their souls, considered separately, "discourse sweet music;" yet they fail to produce perfect harmony between themselves. They do not completely understand each other; nor are they qualified for that spontaneous, full correspondency of sentiments and emotions which blends two kindred beings into one. In forming this relation, there-

fore, it is necessary to ascertain not only a general respectability of character, but likewise a similarity of tastes, a sympathy that shall readily transmit from heart to heart every vibration of feeling. Of such a union, attended with the blessing of Heaven, I know not any language sufficiently energetic to express the felicity. How thankful ought I to be to the God of all goodness that I can say this, as the husband of my Amanda, from my own experience! I may add, however, and it is a delightful truth, that when amiable persons marry in early life, and without a very great disagreement of tastes at the outset, there is always a tendency, and not a weak one, toward that degree of assimilation which is desirable.

Your Friend,

ALBERT.

No. 45. DECEMBER 7, 1815.

The Character of Philautos.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

AMONG the vices which infest society, scarcely any one is so common, or does so much mischief, as that of detraction. It is the more readily exercised by malevolent people as it seldom meets with the punishment it deserves. My observation has taught me that this detestable practice is not confined to any class of mankind, but may be traced through all classes and conditions. Almost every where competition exists, of one kind or other; and competitors are always under temptation to detract from each other's merits. Too frequently, alas, the temptation prevails; and plain, upright men are duped by the influence of ingenious slander, without suspecting the fraud which is imposed upon them. The detracter, by an affected unwillingness to pronounce a derogatory opinion of his neighbour, or by extolling him for qualities of little or no worth, not only plays his tricks

unobserved ; but by this refinement in wickedness recommends himself to the world as a strict follower of the rule, " give to every man his due."

By way of illustrating the subject, permit me to introduce a character, to whom I shall give the name of Philautos. He was born of reputable parents, and endowed by nature with talents above the ordinary level. At an early age his father sent him to school, intending to give him all the advantages of a liberal education. But this design was, after a while, frustrated by various reverses of fortune, which it is not material to my purpose to detail. Indigence compelled the parents of this boy to think of putting him out to learn a trade ; and convenience rather than inclination made him consent to become an apprentice to a neighbouring bootmaker. It was here that I first became acquainted with Philautos ; and to him am I indebted for my first knowledge of the vice of detraction. I was sent to this shop, (in which he was now employed as a journeyman,) with my father's boots, to get them repaired. Taking the boots in his hand, Philautos spent several minutes in looking at their stitches and at me alternately ; with an air expressing more strongly than words his disapprobation of the workmanship. At this I was surprised, having heard my father repeatedly praising these boots, as the neatest and best he had ever worn. Upon my asking our journeyman whether he thought them badly executed, he again looked at them, and with a sneer remarked, that ' he did not like to pass an opinion ; but the maker of them was considered very good at half-soaling.'

An absence during a number of years from my old vicinity precluded a farther personal observation of the conduct of Philautos toward those of his own craft. On my return, I learned that, after trying several other pursuits for a livelihood, he had recently opened a small store in one of our villages. I found that a disposition to injure persons of his own calling had attended him through all his successive changes of bu-

siness. And as his behaviour respecting the boots had made an unusual impression upon my mind, by first opening my eyes to an evil of which I have since had ample opportunity to be taught the deplorable prevalence, I resolved with myself that I would mark the propensity of the man in his new occupation as a merchant. Accordingly, a few days after, I called at his store. Philautos recognized me instantly as a former customer; for so tenacious is his memory that he never forgets the person of any one who has dealt with him even to the smallest amount. The usual salutations having been exchanged, I inquired about his success in merchandise. He told me 'he had made considerable sales; but the competition was so great as to render the profits trifling.' Upon my remarking that his next-door neighbour was doing very well, he observed that 'he was accommodating to his customers, but report said that his goods were damaged.' Of a second, he insinuated that 'he had no fixed prices;' and of a third, that 'he kept bad accounts.' After examining a waistcoat pattern which I held in my hand, and getting information of the price I had given for it, he exhibited a variety of others to me, which he affirmed to be of better quality, and at more reduced prices. I could not avoid contrasting, in my thoughts, the conduct of this serpentine being with that of my friend Fairman, a merchant also; who speaks ill of no one, and well of all so far as he honestly can; and who rests his hopes of success upon his own integrity and good name, not upon the baseness, whether real or imputed, of his neighbours. Philautos gave me to understand, at parting, that he was weary of retailing small wares behind a counter, and intended to turn his views to physic.

Strange as it may appear, this purpose was carried into execution. Not many years had passed away, when the very individual whom I had once seen mending my father's boots was sent for to patch up the health of a respectable old gentleman who lived in the

same town with myself. In one of my daily visits of friendship to the invalide, I met with the doctor. This was what I wished for, with a degree of eagerness; for I must acknowledge that the study of man, and especially of the influence of various professions and pursuits in modifying character, has always been my hobby. And where could a finer subject be presented for this kind of speculation than Dr. Philautos? Our conversation during the first hour was of a general and amusing nature. Though I know little of the doctrines of Hippocrates, I could perceive that our physician was not unacquainted with the principles of his art; and that he had acquired a handsome fund of information upon other topics also. He spoke freely, and rather approvingly, of many medical gentlemen who moved without his own circle of action. But when interrogated respecting those within it, his ancient venom again manifested itself; for however meritorious his rivals might be, he would only reply with ambiguous, disparaging looks and shrugs, or with saying 'they were very attentive to the sick,' or something to the same effect. Filled with indignation at such malignity, I was irresistibly led to the conclusion that liberal pursuits do not always liberalize the character, and that the mind may be expanded with knowledge while the heart is contracted with selfishness. But to proceed with my biography. The doctor went on practising physic, in the full sunshine of popular favour, and with no small improvement of his fortune. At length, as a righteous providence would have it, he met with an overthrow by his own empoisoned weapon, and from a quarter whence he least expected it. The circumstances were these. He had with assiduity, and doubtless with skill too, endeavoured to wrest from the hands of death a young lady of distinction. No skill, however, can achieve what is impossible; the lady grew more disordered and weak every day. Her friends, anxious for her preservation, accepted, at the last stage of the disease, the voluntary

services of an impudent quack. This son of imposture soon declared the case to be a hopeless one; and rather insinuated than asserted that the fatal issue was to be ascribed entirely to injudicious treatment. The evil report flew abroad with the rapidity of lightning; and it was disingenuously argued that as the melancholy event had been truly foretold by the pretender, it confirmed his opinion of our hero's incompetency. In a short time Dr. Philautos began to find his business decline. He considered it most prudent to forsake the practice of medicine before it should forsake him, and to turn his versatile talents without delay to a new object. While I am writing this, he is deeply immersed in the study of the law, with a view to the bar; which, in the course of a few months, he will probably enter with credit. Whether Coke and Blackstone will cure his habits of detraction remains to be discovered.

Were the world sufficiently apprised of the designs of bad men in the reproaches and insinuations which they cast upon others, the pernicious consequences of this diabolical iniquity would be reduced within much narrower bounds. But as we cannot penetrate the recesses of the heart, our best rule is always to disbelieve, or at least to doubt the correctness of reproachful language, when it evidently tends to promote the wealth or gratify the pride of its author. Thrice happy would it be if the same friendly spirit prevailed among us in our respective professions and avocations which was exemplified in the reign of Augustus by the great writers at Rome; who "lived together," as Mr. Addison observes, "in so good an understanding, and celebrated one another with so much generosity, that each of them receives an additional lustre from his contemporaries; and is more famous for having lived with men of so extraordinary a genius, than if he had himself been the sole wonder of the age."

C. SCRIBLERUS.

No. 46. DECEMBER 28, 1815.

On the Defective State of Politeness in Manners.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

AS the public appear to attend willingly to you in your office of a friendly monitor, I shall lay before you my complaint of a grievance which you have not yet noticed in your papers; namely the very low state of politeness in our social intercourse. By politeness of manners I do not mean the flourishes of the varnished coxcomb and the frisky beau; but those plain, courteous movements of the tongue, the head, and the hand, which suitably indicate a benevolent heart. These kind and respectful attentions, which give such a charm to society, are much neglected; and indeed, in some parts of the country, are growing more and more out of date. Sometimes in saluting a fellow citizen as he passes, feeling towards him as a man and a brother, I get nothing in return but a hard, inquisitive stare. Tell me, sir, whether I ought to accost such a one when I meet him again, or rebuke him so far as I can by silent contempt? Frequently, when I have offered my best address, I could only perceive a small motion of the lips; leaving me in doubt whether the person muttered something to himself, or reciprocated my civility. Bowing the head seems likely to go utterly out of fashion; while our sullen stiffness and indifference of deportment are thought to evince manliness and independence of mind. Among the roamers of the wilderness, all this might be expected of course; but in cultivated life, we justly demand that the social virtues be cherished and practised. I am tempted to think that we are losing the respect which we ought to feel for the dignity of human nature; and that the generosity, liberality, and mutual deference of our forefathers are giving way to a cold, repulsive harshness of behaviour. Avarice, I fear, may be denominated, with a good warrant, the besetting sin of our time and country. And the severe

conflicts of interest, with the mean jealousies and envies, produced by avarice, must operate against the cultivation of a proper taste in manners. Appearances show broadly enough that our progress in knowledge and refinement does not keep pace with our increase of wealth. Instead of studying the best use of money, not a few make the indefinite accumulation of it the sole ambition and business of their lives.

C. CIVILIS.

My correspondent complains strongly. Whether he is fully justified by facts or not, I shall leave to my readers to determine. But I also have long observed some changes,—I cannot esteem them improvements,—in the manners of my countrymen. Within my remembrace, the bow of the head in salutation was generally in vogue. Now, we have the slight nod in its place, and sometimes not even that, poor a substitute as it is. The cordial squeeze of the hand is metamorphosed into a frosty, negligent touch, which expresses nothing, and therefore, without much loss, is not seldom omitted altogether. In former days too the lovely sex used to honour us with the deep and graceful courtesy. They do no such thing at present; and indeed we have so much diminished our complaisant regards to them, that we no longer deserve such a token of their reverence.

We have still remaining a few Virginians of the true old school. Occasionally I meet with a lady or gentleman whose carriage is marked with the urbanity and endearments of the years that are gone, and it cheers my heart, as a kind of renewal of the season of my youth, as well as an evidence of the amiable dispositions of my company. And though what I am going to say may expose me to a smile in these sturdy, ungallant times, I must say it; a courtesy from an elegant woman captivates me so much, that in my gratitude I could almost bend my head to the ground on which she walks.

Civilis thinks that avarice has something to do in the change of manners to which we have adverted. He may be right. Nothing dries up the springs of benevolence, nothing banishes the social charities, so effectually as this groveling passion. But I have suspected that our republican institutions had a principal share in the introduction of our less courteous modes of address. The feeling of our equality as citizens is habitual to our minds; and it is a feeling which we are prompted by our pride to exhibit. Impressed as I am with this idea, I am sorry, with all my attachment to republicanism, that we cannot enjoy its benefits without paying this unpleasant tax for them. But it is not a singular case. The melancholy truth is daily and hourly brought home to us by our experience, that few good things are to be obtained without some expense, and some mixture of evil.

No. 47. JANUARY 18, 1816.

The Treatment Due to a Good Teacher.

WHILE I observe the vast numbers of children who are growing up in our valley, my mind is frequently occupied with thoughts on their education. I have laid down, in a former paper, what I conceived to be the qualifications requisite in a good teacher of an English school. The subject of the remarks I am now about to offer is the treatment which such a teacher ought to receive from his employers.

It is taken for granted that every father wishes his children to be educated; and, if possible, to be educated well, both as to their minds and their morals. It is too monstrous to be supposed that any one can feel no concern respecting the virtue or wickedness of his offspring. And as to learning, if any of my readers do not highly estimate its value either by the use or the want of it, I despair of my ability to say any

thing which would impress such people with conviction.

My first position is that a good teacher is entitled to a handsome compensation for his services. To train twenty or thirty children in the rudiments of knowledge, to watch and regulate their passions, to do all that must be done in order to make them wise and good, I believe to be one of the most laborious and trying employments in the world, as well as one of the most important. The process, indeed, would be rather a pleasure than a task, were all children possessed of sprightly understandings, tractable dispositions, and an ardent thirst for improvement. But this is far from being the fact. Besides the toil of giving instruction to many a dull and slow recipient, the honest master of a school almost continually finds that his prudence must be exerted, and his patience put to the stretch, in the discharge of his arduous duties. Shall such a man, so engaged, be looked upon with a grudging eye, or rewarded with a niggardly hand? Every principle not only of generosity but of equity forbids it. And yet I fear that in this respect there is much to blame in my countrymen. It is evident that poverty is not so often the cause of badly conducted education, as a miserable parsimony of spirit. Many, in their eagerness to hoard fortunes for their children, are unwilling to spare what is necessary to cultivate their minds, and to prepare them for useful and dignified stations in life. Hence the profession, the sacred profession I had well nigh said, of a schoolmaster is, to a dismaying extent, usurped and disgraced by mere pretenders; by men scantily furnished with learning, or with virtue, and in some instances shamefully deficient in both. We see the consequences in the ignorance, the frivolity, and the headstrong tempers and conduct of multitudes of our youth. But all passes smoothly, because such creatures do their work at a cheap rate, underbidding the man of sterling endowments and conscientious fidelity.

In the next place, parents should constantly render to the teacher of their children the tokens of a friendly and polite regard. A good teacher deserves such treatment for his own sake; and it is of moment to his usefulness that he receive it, as it will greatly promote his influence with his pupils. Children are commonly very keen observers of whatever passes around them in which they feel themselves concerned. As soon as you have set a man over them, they mark your own behaviour towards him with a scrutinizing eye. If they see you place him on the footing of an inferior, a poor, servile drudge; they may indeed still call him the master, because they know they must submit to him; but his authority over their feelings will be small; his precepts, admonitions, and example will lose much of their desirable effect, for want of that weight of character which he might derive from your better countenance. By giving him proofs of your cordial esteem, you may likewise afford him a powerful incitement to aim at increasing excellence in his business.

Let us pause, and enlarge our views of this matter; though it be at the expense of something like a digression. I will suppose that your neighbourhood needs a teacher; and that a stranger comes to offer himself to you in that capacity. Do not require him to go from house to house to crave employment; it exhibits him in something of the light of a beggar, and intrenches upon the dignity of his office. Let him apply to some individual, or an appointed committee, who shall call a meeting of the heads of all the families that are interested. As the applicant is a stranger, you ought to exercise caution; but let your caution be perfectly unmingled with a haughty, browbeating carriage. You are to investigate his claims as a man of moral worth by such information as he may produce to you, and as a scholar by your own examination. When you think of your risk in covenanting with him, remember that he also has a risk in undertaking

the labour of teaching for you. Probably a short engagement at first will be most advisable for both parties. Do not indulge the foolish pride of keeping things in unnecessary suspense; but consult among yourselves, in the spirit of neighbourly good will and mutual concession, and decide as promptly as may be practicable what you will do. The language and the parade sometimes used on these occasions, by a knot of purseproud, conceited people, are highly disgusting. While they should be making a fair bargain to promote the welfare of their own families, they seem to fancy that they are consulting how to dispose of a hapless pauper who has fallen upon their hands. If the man of letters possess one particle of sensibility, he must turn his back upon such proceedings with indignation. He does not present himself as an object of your charity, but offers you his services on the ground of reciprocal benefit.

The school being in operation, treat your teacher, as before stated, with uniform friendliness and respect. Take the utmost care not to lead or encourage your children to look slightingly upon the man who is to form their minds and hearts, on account of his humble circumstances. Rather assist him in inspiring the sentiment that riches have nothing to do in a just estimation of character. If you see imperfections in him, (and who among mortals is wholly without them?) never introduce the mention of them in the presence of his pupils. Direct their attention to his good qualities, as things which they are bound to love and to imitate. Cover his faults from their view; or if they are already observed, extenuate and excuse them so far as you uprightly can. It is certainly a matter of deep importance that children think highly of their teacher's principles and conduct. If he prove, on the whole, unworthy of this, the only proper course will be to break up the school without delay; it being manifest that a school in such hands is a nuisance not to be tolerated.

Be not hasty to entertain anger or prejudice against your teacher. Your child comes home, it may be, with some bitter complaint of partiality or severity in the master. The tears and lamentations of your darling distress you, no doubt. But remember that this darling has his share of the pride and perverseness of our depraved nature, and that in matters of this kind there are always two sides to a story. If you deem it right to remonstrate on the case to your teacher, do it with a calm and gentle temper; not taking the part of your child in spite of reason, nor concluding that the man to whom you have transferred a portion of your own authority must be of course an unfeeling tyrant. You may perhaps find that he has been discharging a duty as necessary as it was disagreeable. Without discipline in a school, nothing can prosper there. Or if you demonstrate the teacher to have acted improperly, your cool expostulations, as we suppose him to be a man of sense, will have the effect of preventing the repetition of such things, and will attach him to you with strong bonds of gratitude and esteem. I will add, that though I know teachers are but men, and therefore fallible; yet I also know so much of the business of instructing and governing children, that whenever I hear tales of the sort here mentioned, I think it right, in the first instance, to presume in favour of the teacher's rectitude and wisdom.

It is a great inconvenience to a neighbourhood to be often changing the teachers of their children, even though all who come in succession may be good ones. Some time is inevitably lost, and some confusion induced, by the variety of books and methods which different men bring forward. If, then, you are blessed by providence with a truly able and faithful teacher, I beg you to hold him with a vigorous grasp; and not to suffer yourselves to be deprived of so valuable a treasure, either through your own caprice, or on account of those little infirmities in him to which the best of men are subject in this imperfect world.

No. 48. March 21, 1816.

Distresses of an Old Bachelor.

Mr. Mountaineer,

WITH no small degree of pleasure I have read your useful numbers as they appeared in the Farmer. But while you have touched upon many subjects, and addressed your reproofs and advice to a great multiplicity of characters, your lucubrations contain nothing as yet suited to my case. I will present it, therefore, to your consideration.

It has pleased Heaven to prosper me largely in worldly matters. My industry has issued in the aggregation of unusual wealth. But I have lived without a bosom partner of the other sex, and consequently have no children to inherit my estate. I am now in my sixty second year. In the journey of life, I have passed through many diversified scenes; I have risen early, sat up late, and "eaten the bread of carefulness." While others have been reposing on beds of down, enjoying that rest which nature requires, my midnight hours have been spent too often in planning those schemes, (not unrighteous ones, I thank God,) by which my fortune has been increased. So long as the full tide of health and strength continued to flow, I was not without satisfaction in seeing my exertions crowned with success. But now that tide is ebbing fast away; my joints are enfeebled with age and incessant toils; and to me "the grasshopper has become a burden." I know that I must soon go to my long home, and "give an account of my stewardship." In these circumstances I feel much disconsolation of mind. I have no near and tender relatives, bound to me by the ties of nature and kindness, to cheer my drooping spirits in the close of my days. My fatiguing pilgrimage is to be finished in solitude. My splendid houses, my highly cultivated farms, my useful machinery, my many well trained and trusty servants, are shortly about to pass into the hands of

strangers. Perhaps when my body is laid in the dust, even my name may be ungratefully forgotten by those who succeed me. People who have never felt affection for me may turn my labour and frugality into derision, while they dissipate in wild luxury that abundance which it has cost me so much care to collect and to preserve. These reflections, almost perpetually recurring, have caused a gloomy cloud to settle upon my heart. Figure to yourself a weary traveller, who, after passing through many fertile regions, and enjoying the view of many a delightful landscape, at length arrives at the summit of a hill beneath which all is darkness. He descends, but with reluctant and trembling steps; and prays, as he goes forward, for some benign ray to dispel the gloom, and enlighten his path. Into such a vale, Mr. Mountaineer, I am painfully descending; and my prospects are already lost in the darkness which lies below. Deeply am I convinced that I have been too eager in heaping up riches, and too negligent in providing the desirable supports for age and its infirmities. Give me your counsel, I entreat you. Tell me what I may yet do to repair the imprudence of my past life, and promote my present peace of mind. How shall I dispose of my property, so that my conscience may be at rest, and that my riches may best minister to the honour of my Creator, and the good of my fellow men? Hoping to hear from you, or some of your correspondents, in answer to these inquiries, I subscribe myself your anxious but sincere friend,

C. AN OLD BACHELOR.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

Pray, sir, what has become of your enthusiasm about pronunciation? You must have observed that the English of the valley is very defective in this particular; and I was in hopes that you would specify the errors which are the most glaring and the most common amongst us. Let me bring under your notice a few instances, by way of sample.

I am frequently asked to put my name on a supperscription paper. What sort of queer thing do you suppose this can be? Nothing more than a paper to raise money by subscription.

The preposition, to, is often pronounced as if it were spelled, till; or rather, like the last syllable of the word gentle. This is a violent butchery of language. A neighbour tells me that 'he intends tle go tle a certain place on such a day. It will be somewhat inconvenient; but it is tle close an advantageous contract, an object too important tle be neglected.'

The verb, to lose, is very commonly pronounced, loss. It is right to say, 'I lost my money, and a great loss it was; but to say, 'I could not well afford to loss it,' is grossly wrong.

But the most dreadful instance, to my ear, is the almost universal miscalling of the name of the holy city, Jerusalem. When it is rightly sounded, that is, according to the spelling, it is one of the sweetest words in any language. But what think you of Jeroozlum?

Is there no way to deliver our current speech from the intrusion of such ugly monsters as these?

Yours,

X.

No. 49. March 28, 1818.

On Conscience.

WHAT is conscience? Is it the workmanship of God, an original part of our nature; or is it the fabrication of man? These are interesting questions, and I shall endeavour to give them an answer.

The first relates to the proper meaning of the word conscience. I understand it to signify that faculty of the mind by which we approve or disapprove our actions, (including under that title the unexecuted wishes and intentions within us, as well as actions more commonly so called,) as being right or wrong. Every

exercise of this faculty comprehends two things; namely, an act of judgment, founded on a comparison of our conduct with some standard of rectitude, and a feeling of complacency or of censure, which follows such judgment. I do not find that we distinguish conscience from the moral sense; except that in our way of using the terms we limit the operations of the former to our own actions, while we ascribe to the latter the cognizance of moral objects generally.

That conscience is a natural faculty, and not a mere creature of education, appears as evident to me as that we have any natural faculties whatever. It bears every mark of a primitive part of our constitution. Why is it that all mankind account reason a faculty implanted in our very nature? It does not show itself in the period of our earliest infancy; nor does it arrive at maturity without much exercise and culture. We call it an inborn portion of our nature, because we find it in man throughout the world, and in every age. Now conscience stands upon ground precisely similar. It begins to appear in childhood along with reason; though we do not know the exact time when either of them commences its agency. So far as conscience is a judging power, it is evidently reason itself; it cannot operate, nor is it ever supposed to exist, but in a rational being. It is visible too as universally as reason. Never was a people known who discovered no perception of right and wrong, no sense of merit and demerit, in human actions. We find individuals born without reason; and we deem them melancholy exceptions to the common nature of man. Should we find one who could reason on other topics, but not on those which belong to conscience, we should esteem him a greater and more melancholy exception, a monster in human shape, a frightful prodigy in the moral world.

Besides what has been said, it seems to me a manifest impossibility that education should create a faculty of the mind. The business of education is to awaken and train the natural faculties, not to create new ones.

Can any system of instruction give to an idiot the power of reasoning? Who ever heard of such a thing? And we know idiots to be equally incapable, as might well be expected, of acquiring a sense of moral obligation, equally and perpetually unable to pronounce upon actions the sentence of praise or blame.

Some respectable persons, however, have been made to doubt whether conscience is a natural endowment or not, by such facts as these; that we frequently see it in a very low state of activity, and that different men, and even nations, have adopted quite different rules of moral conduct. To all this I reply, that the faculty of reason, so justly, within sober bounds, the boast of our nature, is in the very same situation. We need not look so far as the land of the Hottentots to discover reason almost absolutely dormant. And among those who possess cultivated minds, and who reason much, what an endless diversity and opposition do we witness in the conclusions adopted by different people, in theology, politics, jurisprudence, medicine, and nearly every subject of speculation! But shall we therefore deny that reason is an original gift of our Creator? Surely no one will pretend that we ought. In the science of morals, as in all other sciences, we have faculties suited to the object of inquiry; and there are a few self-evident truths, or axioms, which constitute the basis of our reasonings. That men often argue badly, and conclude amiss, in matters of morality, no more proves conscience to be a factitious power, than their doing the same in other things proves reason to be a mere human invention. Indeed it would be surprising if men were not oftener led astray in their moral investigations, than in some others, where their prejudices and passions are less interested.

It is sometimes asked, what notions of morality, or whether any at all, would be found in a man grown to years of maturity altogether without education? I answer, it is happily difficult to meet with a subject on which to make the experiment. The most savage peo-

ple are not brought up without a great deal of education; though it is little when compared with that of civilized society. But I will confidently hazard the conjecture that such a man as the question describes would make as good a figure in morals as in rationality. I freely confess that I believe it would be a wretched figure in either respect. It may be true that the fundamental principles of morals would never occur spontaneously to such a benighted mind; but then that mind would be equally ignorant of the plainest axioms belonging to other departments of knowledge. I have a faint recollection of an account I once read of a wild man caught in the woods of Hanover in Germany, and brought thence to England as an object of philosophical curiosity. I think he exhibited only those instincts by which some of the more sagacious brutes are characterized; and was found incapable of being taught to speak, to reason, or to feel any sense of duty. Upon the whole, I see no more warrant for asserting that man is a moral being by education only, than that education alone creates the faculty of reason.

While I contend that conscience is a part of our nature, I am very far from thinking it a kind of little pope in our breasts, which always infallibly dictates, of itself, what it is our duty to do or to forbear. I have been alarmed at the frequency with which I encountered this notion in my walks; for it is a notion as pernicious as it is foolish. We all know that in order to make one a good scholar, the rational powers must be strengthened by assiduous use, and furnished with abundant light and information. So, to make a virtuous character, conscience must not be left to itself, but instructed and disciplined with the utmost industry, and the utmost attainable wisdom. And how worthy is such an object of the most laborious course of exertion! I will add here that no scheme of moral training really deserves the title unless it begins with God and his worship. There is a violent inconsistency in pretending to cherish virtue in all its branches,

while we leave our Maker, our sovereign Lawgiver and Judge, out of our view; while we refuse to render him the reverence, the subjection, and the gratitude, which he claims from us, and enjoins as our primary duties. Moreover, it is not slandering human nature to ask, where are the sufficient motives to steady, undeviating rectitude, even in our social relations, if we despise the favour of the eternal God, and forget or deny our responsibility at his tribunal; or where is our security for the accomplishment of the best resolutions, under those strong temptations to evil with which the world abounds, and to which our wayward and deceitful hearts are so prone to yield, if we disdain to take refuge in his love and protection? A well informed conscience, however necessary and valuable, is not all that we want. It is requisite also, for the efficient practice of virtue, that we possess a high and holy sensibility, and be armed with an inflexible energy of decision; blessings which God alone can bestow, and which they only who worship and obey him have a right to expect.

No. 50. April 18, 1816.

Answer to the Old Bachelor.

IT is time that I should give the best reply in my power to the letter of the Old Bachelor, published in my forty eighth number. He cannot be ignorant that there are many who feel more disposition to laugh at him and his lamentations than to sympathize with him. But so do not I; being convinced by his letter, as well as by what commonly happens in such cases, that he already suffers punishment enough for his celibacy, without the additional stings of ridicule.

The grand and only effectual remedy for every disconsolation of the mind is religion. My readers know that this is one of my fundamental principles; and I am every day convinced more profoundly of its truth.

To all who mourn, throughout the wide range of human misery, I must earnestly recommend devotion to God, and trust in his mercy, as

"A sov'reign balm for ev'ry wound,
A cordial for our fears."

But I will not at present dwell upon the supporting power of religion, as I am led, by some expressions in my correspondent's letter, to hope that he is in the way of discovering this inestimable secret for himself. I advise, however, that he engage not only in prayer, but also in the labours of active charity. Let him seek out the poor and the distressed in his neighbourhood, and spend many of the hours of his declining years in supplying their wants and administering to their comfort. Much distress exists almost every where of which there is little publicly known, and which is only perceived by those who make it their business to "go about doing good." And one of the best methods to banish, or at least to diminish our own sorrows, is to exert ourselves diligently in removing the sorrows of others. To participate the anguish of the afflicted, to help the necessitous, to cheer the orphan, and "make the widow's heart sing for joy;" these are offices which take us out of ourselves, and wonderfully counteract our vexing cares and anxieties.

But the question still remains, how is the Old Bachelor to dispose of his plentiful fortune? In the first place, sir, I desire you impartially to consider the characters and circumstances of your relatives, those whom the law designates as your heirs. If they are indeed dissipated and worthless, I will not be their advocate with you. But do not condemn them upon suspicion; nor reject their reasonable claims upon you as a kinsman, merely because they do not feel for you, what it is impossible they should feel, the affection of children towards a father. After you have settled this point, I think it easy to find out objects for the employment of the largest estate, "so as shall minister to the honour of your Creator, and the good of your

fellow men." I will mention some instances which appear to me important; taking it for certain that you will meet with no serious difficulty in selecting proper hands in which to invest such funds as you may choose to create.

We are mainly an agricultural people; and on the cultivation of the earth our support and prosperity must principally depend. Yet, so far as I can observe, the progress of agricultural knowledge amongst us is very feeble. Every thing creeps along in the channel of traditional practice; and of the few useful discoveries made, there is hardly any such thing as a general communication. Suppose a fund were instituted yielding a handsome premium, to be given periodically for the best treatise on husbandry, adapted to the climate and soils of Virginia. Is it visionary to calculate that considerable benefits would arise from such a scheme?

Science and literature need encouragement. You might do them great service by endowing a professorship in one of our public seminaries; to teach, for instance, natural philosophy, or the law of nature and nations, or history ancient and modern. Or you might lay a foundation for educating liberally one or more poor boys, to be selected for their extraordinary genius and promising moral dispositions; the process to go on perpetually, by filling the place of each youth at his leaving college with a successor of the same description. This would be a lovely benefaction; and vast good might be done by bringing forward, with all the advantages of extensive culture, some of those fine talents which are chilled by want and languishing in obscurity.

Large sums might be very usefully devoted to the furnishing of books and philosophical apparatus to our seminaries of learning. In most of them, I believe, the scantiness of these means of knowledge is very sensibly felt. I think too that the gift of a good library to a neighbourhood would be a generous use of

wealth, from which happy effects might well be expected to result. If the taste for reading is low in our country, one reason of it undoubtedly is the want of sufficiently various and wisely chosen books. The costliness of books is such, that few are able to purchase more than a very limited assortment.

I proceed to the subject which I glory in calling my favourite, the advancement of pure and enlightened religion. I should rejoice to see a fund judiciously invested, affording an annual premium for the best production in defence of revealed religion against the attacks of its adversaries; or in support of any of those vital doctrines of Christianity in which all true Christians agree. These are surely not times in which such performances can be deemed superfluous.

All denominations of Christians amongst us are engaged in the work of missions; that is, in sending the heralds of the gospel to proclaim its glad tidings in the dark and destitute regions of the earth. This work is attended with much expense, and calls loudly for the aid of those among the opulent who feel the value of religion, and wish to see its benign influence universally triumphant.

To every reflecting Christian it must be evident that the number of able ministers of the gospel in our land is very far short of that which is necessary. No profession upon earth more emphatically requires talents and learning, as well as piety, than that of the sacred ministry. But how few have we, including those of all our sects, well qualified for this arduous office! And how is the crying want to be supplied? Obviously, under God, by assisting poor and pious youth, of respectable natural endowments, in their due preparation for the pulpit. This precious mode of doing good is now in practice, and demands the prayers and the bounty of the public at large. It involves expenditures of no trifling magnitude, and presents an inviting field for the distribution of exuberant riches.

To my catalogue of excellent designs I will only

add one other; namely that which bible societies are aiming to accomplish, the diffusion of the holy scriptures from east to west, and from pole to pole. A mighty impulse animates the Christian community in all its dispersions for the consummation of this glorious purpose. Elevated above all their unhappy sectarian dissensions and jealousies, here they can and do unite with one heart and one soul; determined, by the favour of Heaven, to go forward in their exertions until the bible shall be read in every language, and in every spot where man inhabits the globe. Nothing shall destroy my confidence that this is the dawn of that millennial day of righteousness and peace for which our sad world has been groaning through so many ages. The zeal, the liberality, displayed in various parts of Christendom within the last twenty years, for the distribution of the bible, are astonishing indeed. But much remains to be done; vast auxiliary funds are still needed. And how could my friend, the Old Bachelor, after answering the reasonable expectations of his distant kindred, better bestow the surplus of his affluence than in promoting this most comprehensive and exalted charity?

Behold here a variety of noble enterprises, out of which your benevolence may make its choice of one or more. As wealth is one of those trusts for which we are to be responsible to our Master in heaven, it is right that we ask his direction about the proper employment of it. Wishing you that grace of God which can brightly gild the evening of your days, and enable you to pass it in comfort; and that you may be guided so to dedicate your worldly abundance as to make it a blessing to many, I bid you adieu.

No. 51. April 25, 1816.

Another Answer to the Old Bachelor.

AT the moment of delivering my last paper for the press, the following one was put into my hand. I

willingly give it a place, as the ideas presented by the writer certainly deserve consideration, and are not superseded by those which I have myself advanced.

MR. MOUNTAINEER,

In looking over a recent number of your work, my mind was forcibly arrested by the letter of an Old Bachelor. I have long had my eye upon a few characters of this class; and have felt a wish that some good spirit would incline them, before their departure, to make such a disposition of their property as would be of public and lasting utility. By your leave, and without meaning in the least to obtrude my opinions upon your correspondent, I will lay down a plan which has occurred to me for the removal of his difficulties.

What I propose, then, is that he have a will drawn up in due form, signed, sealed, and attested; and this without delay, lest by any sudden casualty he may be deprived, as many have been, of opportunity for doing it. As he has no children to inherit his wealth, and seems to think his distant relations unworthy, I recommend to him, as a principal object in the devising of his estate, the institution of what may be called a school of merit. Let a large sum, say twenty or more thousand dollars, be allotted for the purchase of good and profitable stock, the interest of which shall be appropriated to the education of poor boys. For the greater security, let the money be placed in the hands of the trustees of some one of our colleges, to be so invested by them; and let a power be given them to expend the proceeds according to the particular directions of the donor. Let the business be so arranged that the said board of trustees shall constantly keep in a course of English instruction, under approved teachers, a certain number of boys, to be chosen by the board out of the mass of those who may be offered. Let the board also keep one third as many, (to be selected by them chiefly, though not exclusively, out of the former set,) engaged in study at college, until they

finish the usual course of a liberal education. And whenever a vacancy takes place among the pupils of either description, let it be filled as early as a suitable candidate can be found, and as the state of the fund, liable as it must be to some unforeseen fluctuations, will admit.

What a monument would thus be erected to the memory of the Old Bachelor! A monument like this, I trust, he would esteem far more honourable than statues of marble elevated upon the ruins of desolated nations. The benefits likely to be produced by such a scheme are incalculable. As a stone cast upon the waters forms multiplied waves, and extends them indefinitely all around; so young men of talents, brought in this manner upon the theatre of life, would diffuse through wide circles the fruits of that training which had been bestowed on them. To preserve our civil and religious liberties inviolate, and to transmit them down to posterity unsullied, is allowed by all to be an object of the last importance. In order to this, the people must be at once virtuous and enlightened. But unfortunately many lack the necessary means of improvement. Hundreds are groping in mental darkness for the want of pecuniary aid, in whose minds lie the latent sparks of that genius which might be enkindled into a blaze, and by its genial influence warm and enliven the whole mass of society. Many a brilliant diamond lies buried in the earth. Many a soul which might claim kindred with that of a Bacon, a Newton, or a Locke, remains inactive and useless, because it has never received proper cultivation. Here then is a project richly worthy of your correspondent's attention. Let him appropriate his money to the attainment of it; and I venture to say that he will be performing a work of the highest dignity, and will be held in grateful remembrance by his country long after his body has mouldered into dust. And if, instead of making it a testamentary and posthumous affair, he will commence this benevolent institution immediately,

that thick and distressing darkness which now bounds his vision will be the more effectually dissipated, and his mind the more cheered with the bright prospect of advancing the happiness of ages yet to come.

But let me caution him not to deceive himself with the fancy that the dedication of his golden stores to charitable purposes will, of itself, secure his peace with the great Judge of all. No; while he furnishes his earthly substance for the advantage of his fellow men, let him humbly and thankfully embrace the gospel of divine mercy, and be careful to give himself to God, "a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is his reasonable service."

"So shall his sun in smiles decline,
And bring a pleasant night."

These reflections are respectfully submitted to the Old Bachelor; while I pray for him that he may be directed by the best counsel, even that which cannot lead him astray.

C. AMICUS.

No. 52. MAY 16, 1816.

Disorderly Behaviour at a Singing School.

TO THE MOUNTAINEER.

SIR,

THOUGH I am almost a stranger in your delightful valley, I have already met with a grievance here which calls for your monitorial animadversion. I will therefore lay it before you.

I am a Connecticut man, endeavouring to make an honest livelihood by teaching your young people the art of psalmody. As my voice and skill in this business are undisputed, and my price for tuition is not complained of, I find among you a sufficient readiness to furnish me scholars; and have, at this early stage, three large schools under my care. And most cheerfully am I willing to do justice to the capacities of the

Virginian youth for learning vocal music: I have never elsewhere discovered talents more prompt or more adequate to the pleasing task. Thus far all is well. But now comes the impediment, the unkind interference with my proceedings, of which I am to complain to you.

I dare say, sir, you know enough of schools to be sensible that without strict order nothing can be done in any sort of school to good purpose. My rules, founded on this principle, and allowing a reasonable portion of time for relaxation, were received at the commencement without the least objection. And I believe I should get along with my pupils tolerably well, were we left to ourselves. But this is not the case. Almost every singing day, there comes to our school a squad of inconsiderate, foppish young fellows; sometimes bringing with them a bevy of light, airy girls, just suited to help forward the mischief. These take their seats near our benches, in order, as they pretend, to have the pleasure of hearing us sing. But presently they let themselves loose to loud whispering, tittering, and even open laughter. They step and hop noisily about the floor without a grain of ceremony. Very frequently a little party of them, and at times the whole troop, rush out of the house, and again into it, with a wild racket quite stunning to our ears. And besides all this, they contrive, by nods, winks, and grimaces, to put my scholars out of their lessons, and seduce them into a levity altogether incompatible with my rules. Were I to express the indignation which these various annoyances constrain me to feel, I should use strong and sharp words indeed; but as I have more tenderness for the sensibility of these disturbers than they have for mine, I will ask your leave to expostulate calmly with them upon their behaviour.

In the first place, then, it is palpably injurious to us. By distracting the thoughts of my pupils, and checking their exertions, these persecutors greatly retard their progress in the art which they are striving to

learn. It is obvious, in fact, that but few can be expected to make a good proficiency amidst so many things calculated to defeat the best instructions. And as I know how apt mankind are to judge with haste and prejudice, I am not without apprehensions of losing my reputation as a teacher, and being branded as an idler, and perhaps an ignoramus in my profession. Such reproaches, my conscience tells me, would be as unmerited as disagreeable. Do these giddy youngsters, who frequent my school room with no better view than that of trifling time away in each other's company, do they ever consider what pernicious effects their sport may produce? They ought, and I indulge some hope that they will consider it.

In the next place, such conduct is highly indecorous. In the hours allotted to study, I want the undivided attention of my scholars. Every upright teacher wishes and has a right to such attention. To break in upon it with noise and nonsense; to seek amusement in captivating the minds of my young people with silly merriment and frivolity, and even inspiring them with contempt for their instructor; I will appeal to the persons concerned to judge whether such doings are consistent with the delicacy of a gentleman or a lady. In the case of a singing school, these things are peculiarly impolite. We are engaged in the practice as well as the science of sweet sounds. We do the best we can to entertain all who may hear our performance. And as it is the most soothing respect which we can desire, that they listen to us with a willingness to be pleased; so it is a mortification uncommonly trying to find our best efforts to charm the ear disregarded; unless we avoid this mortification by the exercise of sovereign contempt for our unfeeling auditors. Did we chain people down beside us, and compel them to hear, they would have some reason for expressing their impatience. But when they come and stay voluntarily, such treatment of us as I have described is in reality nothing short of wanton insult, and utterly incapable of being excused.

Once more, there is in this kind of behaviour a deep tinge of profaneness. A school of sacred, vocal music has so far a resemblance to the house of God, that it is a scene from which all levity should be banished far away. During a great part of the time spent in our employment, we are singing words of the most solemn and devotional import. And is such an avocation to be contemplated as a mere unmeaning form, or to be trifled with as a despicable jest? It is impossible, if the heart possesses any reverence for God and religion. All decent people admit that a light carriage in the church deserves severe rebuke; and for my part, I cannot see that much less reprehension is due to the same carriage in a school of psalmody.

If, sir, you think on this subject as I do, let me beg your aid in attempting to remove the evils which I have delineated.

Yours,

MARTIN MINIM.

Mr. Minim has left me little to add to his remonstrance. I agree with him entirely; and have often felt much disgust at witnessing the vulgar rudeness of which he complains. I do not choose to soften a single expression in his letter. To have no ear, no more relish than a block of marble, for the beauties of harmony, is a defect which those who labour under it should certainly not be forward to betray. We can, at best, only think of it with compassion. But when a stupid contempt of music obtrudes itself upon us, with the additional deformities of injustice, bad breeding, and the scorn of sacred things, we are tempted to pour upon it the utmost severity of censure.

No. 53. MAY 30, 1816.

On the University of Virginia.

OUR state legislature has announced its purpose or wish to establish a seminary of learning upon a large scale, with the title of THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA. Such an idea, so presented to our view, cannot fail to excite a lively interest in every reflecting and patriotic mind. How far the institution shall prove a blessing to society, must greatly depend on the wisdom of those who have the charge of settling its cardinal principles, and enacting the rules by which it is to be conducted. The subject is a very extensive and awfully solemn one. While I entertain no doubt that it does and will employ the best heads of which we can boast, I shall use my right as a citizen to express my opinion upon one solitary point; I mean the religious aspect of the university.

I lay it down as a truth of the first importance, a truth which no length of time can render obsolete, that the fear of God is the foundation of all human dignity and welfare. The whole history of mankind illustrates this position. In proportion as the fear of God prevails, individuals and social bodies are virtuous, free, and happy: in proportion as it is despised and discarded, men are fitted by their vices to become slaves, and actually sink into degradation and ruin. It is insinuated, and even asserted not unfrequently in our day, that knowledge alone, or what may be called the diffusion of intellectual light, will be sufficient for the preservation of our national liberties and prosperity. In my judgment, no assertion can be more false, no doctrine more deleterious in its tendency. Try this pretended maxim by the recent instance of the French revolution. Never had any people cultivated literature, the sciences, and the arts, more successfully than the French; nor could any country vie with theirs as the model of taste and fashion to the civilized world. But what was their condition in regard to religion and

morals? They had exchanged the corrupt dogmas and childish ceremonials handed down to them by their fathers, not for the heavenly lamp of divine revelation, but for the folly and licentiousness of infidelity. The book which God has given us they trampled under their feet, as a fable; and dismissed his fear from their hearts, as a contemptible and antiquated superstition. Their own proud reason, teeming with the reveries of a visionary philosophy, they made their idol; and to no other divinity in the universe would they condescend to pay their homage. Thus prepared for their civil emancipation, they resolved and proclaimed it; and speedily swept away their old monarchy and all its appendages with the besom of destruction. France became a republic. By their example and their energies, her millions of sages were to spread the blessings of truth, liberty, and happiness, to the remotest limits of the earth. But how has the mighty explosion terminated? After being convinced, within a few years, by their own enormous crimes and miseries, that they were incapable of governing themselves; after abandoning, of their own accord, their boasted republicanism, and flying from mutual violence to crouch at the feet of a ruthless and arbitrary despot; after disgracing themselves forever as the deceivers, plunderers, and butchers of every nation within their reach; themselves sustaining, all the while, an infinitude of sufferings, and the loss of oceans of blood; the French people are at this moment reduced, by foreign power, under their ancient line of kings, little more free, and not at all more happy, than they were thirty years ago. The history stands recorded in terrific lustre, and is as full of instruction as of horror. The sum of the lessons which it inculcates, and which it behooves us deeply to feel and acknowledge, is that liberty cannot exist without morals, and that the only firm basis of morality is religious principle.

If these things are so; if man is very much the creature of education; and if, moreover, after this

fleeting life, we are all to pass into a state of endless joy or sorrow, according to the deeds which we have done here; the inference is irresistible, that every system of instruction, whether large or small, should recognise religion as its first concern. The more extended the influence of any seminary may be in the formation of character, and in giving the tone to public sentiment and manners, so much the more necessary is it that in such seminary religion be received and honoured. In applying these maxims to the university of Virginia, I trust my readers will not understand me to mean by religion the little peculiarities of sects and parties; but the grand doctrines and precepts of our common Christianity, in opposition to infidelity and atheism. Under these impressions, I think the following rules should be adopted as sacred and unalterable.

Every professor, or other teacher, in the university, from the highest to the lowest, should be required, before his entrance into office, solemnly to avow his belief in the existence of one all-perfect God, the Creator and moral Governor of the world; in the divine authority of the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as a revelation from God, the infallible standard of faith and of practice; in the trinity of persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; in the universal proneness of our fallen nature to transgression rather than to righteousness; in our restoration to the favour of God only through the merits and atoning sacrifice of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; in the work of the Spirit of God upon our hearts, by which we are turned from sin to holiness; and in the judgment to come, when the whole human race shall stand before the tribunal of God, awaiting from his hands the retribution of everlasting life or everlasting punishment, according as they have obeyed or disobeyed his known commandments.

Every professor, or other teacher, should be subjected to dismission from office on proof of his having

written or spoken any thing in opposition to the above confession, or to any part of it. And the same penalty should be annexed to his being found guilty of any immoral conduct, and especially to his persisting in such immorality.

It should be made the duty of some professor, say the professor of moral science, to deliver, within the course of every session, a series of lectures on the evidences of religion, natural and revealed; and these lectures all the students should be bound to attend. Such discourses, without being numerous or tedious, might be exceedingly useful in fortifying the minds of the young against the assaults of infidelity.

Solemn prayer to Almighty God should be performed every morning and evening by the professors in the hall of the university, accompanied with the reading of a portion of the scriptures. And every student should be required to attend these exercises.

The students should be obliged to resort to the public worship of God, if practicable, every sabbath, with a decent and respectful behaviour; and to abstain, throughout this most important day, from worldly studies, and all other pursuits which tend to violate its sacred character.

Every student should be bound to have in his possession a copy of the holy scriptures, ready at all times to be exhibited on demand.

The students should be made liable to expulsion for malignant or contemptuous language, uttered either by writing or speech, against God, his word, his sacraments, or any of the essential doctrines of religion. And in the laws established for regulating the moral deportment of students, profane swearing, cursing, and every other mode of taking the name of God in vain, should be marked as crimes of a high grade, and punished accordingly.

These rules are proposed as an outline of the religious system which I wish to see introduced. I feel no anxiety about the particular forms of expression

which have dropped from my pen; but I should painfully dread the consequences of any departure from the substance. The adoption or rejection of such a system in the contemplated university will, in a very great measure, decide the question, whether Virginia chooses to occupy the standing of a Christian community or not. Full well am I aware how strongly the current of a godless philosophy bears against the sentiments which I have advanced. Infidels, and the poor dupes of infidel vanities, will sneeringly fling this humble paper aside, if it happen to meet their eyes. They will repeat their traditionary cant about bigotry and fanaticism; and ask, what religion has to do with liberal education, just as they ask what it has to do with civil government. We know what it is that the champions of scepticism and irreligion are aiming to accomplish. They labour covertly to exclude the fear of God first from one department of human life, and then from another, until they get it banished, if possible, from the world altogether. They displace the bible from our rudimental schools. They discountenance piety and discipline in our public seminaries. They frown upon religion in our legislative assembly. Take it as they may, I will declare that I glory in the sneers of such men, as I glory in the gospel which I love; that blessed gospel without whose gracious influence this earth would be a land of idle dreams and shadows, or rather a desert overwhelmed with wickedness, misery, and despair.

Some of my friends and neighbours exhort me to rejoice in the prospect of this splendid university. I wish and intend to cherish the best hopes respecting it that I can; and when I shall see the rules which I have suggested, or something equal to them in amount, realized, then, and not till then, will I rejoice and be glad with all my heart. For the God of truth has pronounced that "he will honour those who honour him; and that they who despise him shall be lightly esteemed."

No. 54. JUNE 6, 1816.

The Drunken Husband.

IT was about the middle station in society that was occupied by the respectable parents of Ellen Eastbrook. With a lovely face, and a fine person, Ellen possessed a sprightly intellect, tolerably well cultivated, and one of the most friendly tempers in the wide world. Her voice was music; her manners were easy and graceful; and her ever ready and benevolent smile fascinated all beholders.

My readers will find no difficulty in believing that such a girl would early have admirers among the youth who had opportunities of becoming acquainted with her. Indeed she had not quite completed her eighteenth year, when she found herself surrounded with at least half a dozen of young men; more or less worthy, who were suing for her heart and hand. It is very remarkable, and deserving much praise, that all this homage did not corrupt the simplicity of her mind. Courted and flattered as she was every day, she remained the same artless, modest, unassuming maiden as before.

With the rest of her lovers came Frederic Fielding. He was a gentleman about five years older than Ellen. His brilliant talents had been polished by liberal studies; and he was just commencing the practice of the law. I will not dwell upon his personal accomplishments. Suffice it to say that as his fortune and prospects recommended him to the parents, so his appearance and manners were abundantly suited to attract the eye and seize the fancy of the daughter. And now Ellen committed her first great fault; she suffered her affections to become fixed upon Frederic too rapidly, without a due investigation of the whole of his character. A wise and faithful friend of hers, perceiving how things were going on, warned her once and again of the danger which lay in her path; assuring her, from indubitable authority, that her favoured swain

was already much too fond of the bottle; that he had several times been seen intoxicated; and that he was also an eager votary of the gaming table. Here poor Ellen fell into two errors more. Instead of candidly weighing the proofs, she laboured hard, and of course not without a degree of success, to persuade herself that these stories concerning her lover were either mistakes or slanders; and she was displeased, avowedly displeased, with her friend for making the communication. By the by, to tell a friend needful but disagreeable truth is one of the most self-denying and noble instances of attachment. But when Ellen could not set her feelings entirely at ease by resisting evidence, her next resource,—such power has love to blind and to deceive,—was the indulgence of a hope that her tenderness, her dutiful conduct, and her entreaties, would soon reclaim Frederic from the irregularities into which he might have fallen. Under a denomination so palliative did she disguise to herself vices the most degrading and the most perilous. Cased in such feeble armour, she disregarded even the earnest cautions of her father and mother, which they gave her as soon as the facts came to their knowledge. Nothing would do for her but she must be married to her dear Frederic; and accordingly married they were, amidst the sad apprehensions of many who felt an interest in her welfare.

For some weeks, perhaps I may safely say months, all proceeded delightfully. The enamoured Frederic had no relish for any pleasure out of the company of his blooming and charming bride; and this bride thought herself transported into an elysium where no chilling blasts were ever to blow. But how precarious are the calculations and enjoyments of man! Ellen had almost as many varieties of attraction as one fine woman could have, and was devoted to her husband with as much love as her precious little heart could hold. Yet to him the novelty of the scene began to wear off; and as that novelty departed, the de-

lirium of his passion began to subside. Affection, tender and lasting affection, ought to have succeeded; and would, had it not been for those fatal habits of vice which he had contracted. His professional business led him to public places. His former companions came about him, and his former temptations recurred. For a while he restrained his bad inclinations in some measure, on account of his wife; and especially he took care to conceal his shameful practices from her. But his desires gained strength by his yielding to them, and concealment became impossible. He frequently returned home from court in a state far from sober. His wife's tears, and sometimes a few words of meek, soft expostulation which she whispered to him in his cooler moments, roused his conscience, and pierced him to the very quick. At such moments he acknowledged his offences to her, begged her forgiveness, which was always readily and endearingly granted, and formed excellent resolutions for the future. But habit and temptation prevailed over all. Ellen's mildest supplications, even her looks of distress, and the pearly drop that trickled, in spite of her wishes, from her fading eye, he at length began to consider as reproaches which it befitted him, as a man of spirit, to resent. His behaviour to her assumed the style of peevishness, and not rarely that of cruelty. In the main, he shunned her society, and plunged continually deeper into sin and folly.

But I will not attempt to trace any farther the particular steps of so dreadful a progress to ruin. In the course of seven years, this pair had four interesting children. Frederic had now brought his family to poverty, and constant fear of the sheriff; partly by gaming; for his debts of honour were to be paid, and that in the first place too, so long as he had the means; and partly by the loss of his employment as a lawyer; for no client would commit his cause to the management of a drunkard, nor suffer his money to be collected by an inveterate gamester. He had become a

confirmed sot. His understanding was much impaired; though one might, at intervals, observe a flash of its original brightness. His affection for the partner of his bosom, his once beloved Ellen, appeared to be utterly extinguished; and his rosy-cheeked, promising little ones seemed to excite in his depraved breast no emotions of fatherly regard. He loved nothing but the inebriating poison which was destroying him, both soul and body. Stay; there was one other thing, a being in female shape, for whom he had a low and most criminal fondness. How shall I describe her? A homely, insolent yellow slave; whom he basely made the object of his preference, almost under the very sight of his injured wife. That hapless wife, she who used to be the beauteous, cheerful, joy-inspiring Ellen, to what was she now reduced? Though still in the prime of her days, she was worn down, emaciated, by trouble and sorrow, to the semblance of a skeleton. In looking at her sallow cheeks, and her languid, sunken eyes, one could not help inquiring, in melancholy silence, whither all that sparkling loveliness had fled which had been so loudly celebrated. Her children, however, were dear to her heart; and she took the utmost pains to bring them up in the ways of piety and virtue. In discharging, to the best of her ability, the duties of a Christian mother, she found some relief from the woes of her condition. Yet there were hours when the remembrance of happy scenes long past, and never to return, would fill her soul with anguish; and cause her to shed bitter tears over her own deplorable lot, and the fall of her wretched husband.

Nearly a twelvemonth before the last date of which I have been writing, it had pleased the God of mercy to bestow upon this daughter of affliction an experimental knowledge of his salvation. From an early stage of the work of grace, her reliance upon God through Jesus Christ was strong and abiding. And that reliance did not fail to afford her its consolatory

balm. She has often told a friend that she had bidden adieu to almost every earthly joy and hope; that religion was all her support under her heavy trials; and that she expected no resting place on this side of heaven.

During a number of years I have seldom had any intelligence respecting this family. I can only learn that these years have rolled on without producing any change for the better in its situation.

And now, young ladies, the fairest ornaments of my native land, my story contains an important lesson for you. But I will not affront you, on the score of your good sense, by telling you what this lesson is: you will discern it, and I trust you will apply it to practice with unwavering decision, if the occasion shall arise. May Heaven guide you to true felicity in the paths of wisdom and discretion.

No. 55. JULY 11, 1816.

Profaneness Inconsistent with Politeness.

THE practice of common cursing and swearing has often been proved to be full of impiety. It is an insult to the majesty of the great God, the consequences of which will one day make the guilty tremble.

This practice has also been represented as striking at the vital interests of society, by diminishing the obstacles in the way to perjury. Is this mere speculation? I think not. Why do we use oaths at inductions into office? Why do we impose them upon witnesses and jurymen in the administration of justice? Is it not to bind men to their duty by the solemnity of an appeal to God, the Searcher and the Judge of all hearts? And has not the crime we are considering a sure tendency to render the heart less sensible to the force of such an appeal?

These things, however, are not precisely in my

road at present. I request the reader's attention to another view of this same hateful practice. It is contrary to politeness, directly and strongly contrary to the principles and manners of a gentleman. The charge may, to some, appear strange and unwarrantable; but I undertake to support it as a truth not to be invalidated.

Define politeness as you will, it must include the standing rule, never to give unnecessary offence to any individual of one's company. Now a company is rarely made up without including some to whom profane language is offensive. It is always possible, and a delicate mind will always remember it to be supposable, that there may be such persons within the circle, until the reverse has been ascertained. To the pious man, whose heart glows with love and veneration toward his God, it is inexpressibly shocking to hear the sacred name of his Creator and his Father sported with as an idle expletive of discourse, and his curses invoked either in the heat of passion or the wantonness of levity. Such conduct as this must give pain, exquisite pain, to every human being who retains any share of reverence for the Sovereign of heaven and earth. Should the swearer assert that all this is sheer fanaticism, which he is not bound to respect in his manner of speaking; I would answer, he may as well pretend that his having the honour and glory of being an atheist entitles him to spit in the face of every man who believes there is a God. He may show that he is totally indifferent to our feelings, or that he even finds gratification in harrowing them up with violence. From either of these sources, he may think it no small amusement, provided his courage is sufficient, to wound us severely, by spitting in our faces, or by profaning the name of our God. But in the mean time, what becomes of his character as a gentleman?

I have said that it is the principle of a gentleman to avoid giving unnecessary offence. Are cursing and swearing in conversation necessary things? What good end do they promote? Will profane language increase the wealth of him who uses it? Will it preserve his

body from the assaults of disease? Will it supply the deficiencies of his understanding or his knowledge? Is it needful to confirm the word of a man of veracity; or will it make us believe the declarations of one whose veracity is doubtful? It is wasting time to multiply questions upon this point. I have known many profane swearers, but never heard the utility of their practice seriously maintained. It has been my misfortune to witness much of this glaring abuse of the gift of speech, in its horrible variety of forms; but I never found an instance in which it subserved any desirable purpose whatever. It inflicts torture upon every sober ear, and that without the least extenuating circumstance of necessity or advantage.

These culprits sometimes endeavour, with an air of condescension, to excuse themselves by saying that they spoke without thought. I reply, a man of refined sensibilities does think. He thinks habitually, and carefully too, that he may avoid hurting the feelings of others. In regard to sense, he who says that he spoke without thought confesses that he spoke as a fool; and in regard to politeness, he who pleads that he did not consider what he was saying acknowledges, by the very plea, that he was then acting a part perfectly at war with that of a gentleman.

But suppose it to be a fact ascertained that none of the company will be offended by profane language; how can it violate the rule of politeness in this situation? Well, the argument which I have in hand does not apply here; let the swearer take this for a case in his favour, and make the most of it. He is not just now inflicting pain upon his companions; for in the pandemonium where they are collected, all are as impiously callous to this kind of pain as himself. He is only provoking, with a high hand, the vengeance of God Almighty, and strengthening in himself and his comrades a habit calculated to outrage the feelings of serious people at some future hour.

I think my proposition is demonstrated. How can this simple reasoning be refuted? I challenge any one.

to the attempt. Let me imagine, then, (and it is a thing which has been frequently and calamitously realized in my experience,) that on taking my seat, as a stranger, in the stage coach, or at a public dining table, my ears are immediately and almost incessantly assailed with heaven-daring oaths and curses; what idea shall I reasonably entertain of the man who makes these atrocious and butcherly attacks upon my peace? He may wear a superfine coat, and have his pockets filled with money. He may possess all the personal graces which nature and art can bestow. He may be a man of learning and of wit. He may stand high in office, and in the applauses which a vain world lavishes upon its idols. But I am authorized, I am compelled to pronounce him grossly deficient in the attributes and behaviour of a gentleman.

No. 56. JULY 18, 1816.

Conclusion of the Work.

WITH this number, I have resolved to discontinue my labours. I would rather think them indefinitely suspended than closed forever; but the latter, in all likelihood, will prove to be the fact. Those who have taken a friendly interest in the work have a right to be informed why it is now brought to a conclusion. The reason is not that subjects are wanting on which to speculate, nor that I lack either time or inclination to go forward; but simply that I have not received the aid which I always knew to be necessary, and which, for several years, I still fondly expected.

These papers were begun with a design of large extent; a design calculated, in the event of a good execution, to be useful to the public in no trifling degree. But I had not the presumption to engage in such a task relying upon myself alone. I was conscious of my own inability to make the Mountaineer such a thing as I wished it to be, and I supplicated repeatedly for assistance. I had in my mind's eye about half a score of

literary friends, for whose talents I felt the highest esteem, and whom I hoped to allure into a zealous cooperation with me in the honourable effort to advance the moral and intellectual improvement of our fellow citizens. But this hope was a castle in the air; and indeed it was not the first, by some hundreds, of the frail structures so denominated which I have built in my time. I found myself disappointed. The persons alluded to probably either thought my plan of doing good too insignificant, or were too much occupied otherwise to command leisure for complying with my request.

Let me not be understood to speak slightingly of the help which has been afforded me. Of the lovers of virtue and good manners, some have furnished communications very acceptable to me, and, as I believe, to my readers also. Others have sent me what might be called materials for writing, of which I have made free use, according to the best of my skill and judgment. To all my correspondents I here tender my thanks for their kindness. Though they are, with a few exceptions, personally unknown to me, the coincidence of our ideas and purposes binds us to each other with an attachment which, I trust, we shall not soon give up to oblivion.

I have no fear that I shall be censured by the wise and candid, when I freely avow that in the prosecution of my scheme I have enjoyed more than a diminutive share of pleasure. I have carried with me, at every step, the inward testimony of my sincere good will toward those whom I was addressing; and the cheering anticipation that my exertions for their welfare would not be altogether fruitless. However I may have been overlooked by the many, I have occasionally been greeted with words of encouragement by some of those whose approbation I was most solicitous to obtain. I have delighted in that mental communion which I considered myself to be holding with such as would enter into my views, and would thank me for the exhibition of sound principles, and the administration of salutary counsel. And this communion

was certainly not the less delicious to me on account of the veil of secrecy with which it was shrouded. To the young, whose habits were yet to be formed, and whose hearts were most susceptible of right impressions, I have looked, with peculiar anxiety for their success in all worthy pursuits, and peculiar confidence that I might be instrumental in its promotion. Retiring from noise and care and trouble, often have I seized the pen with avidity, and said to myself, now let me try to present to my dear youthful pupils something which may be at once engaging and profitable.

In the review of what I have done, I see much to inspire me with humility. At the same time, I wish I could look back upon every project and action of my life with as much satisfaction as I possess in having written and published these essays.

I have no title to make a parade with my adieus, nor am I inclined to do so. I do not think that those who will be much concerned at taking leave of the Mountaineer are very numerous. Yet I find it painful to utter the last valediction. We are social beings; and a great portion of the charm of life arises from the interchange of sentiment and affection. Experience convinces us that unless our company is quite insipid, or rather positively disagreeable, we cannot pass the moment of final separation without some melancholy emotions. But all earthly connexions are to be dissolved; and we must submit as well as we can to the law of necessity. Let us remember that we are evermore hastening onward from this region of vicissitude to the bar of the Almighty. Let us make his word our guide through the perilous wilderness in which we are traveling; and estimate every thing as vanity and delusion in comparison with his favour. Fervently praying that you, my benevolent friends, may be as happy in this world as such an imperfect state admits, and that you may at last partake of that consummate and eternal happiness which God has promised to his children, I commend you to his blessing, and bid you farewell.

FINIS.

The Path to Glory.

HAPPY the youth whose heav'n-born choice
Turns him from sin's destructive way;
Who gives his ear to wisdom's voice,
And strives her precepts to obey.

Conscious of guilt, his only rest
Is found when Calv'ry meets his view:
He flies to his Redeemer's breast,
And vows to be his servant too.

By earnest prayer for light and grace,
He gains, each day, a fresh supply;
And thus, unwearied, runs the race
That leads him to the prize on high.

Protected by almighty pow'r
His steadfast soul no terror knows,
Though war awaits him, ev'ry hour,
With armies of surrounding foes.

In vain the world employs her wiles
To check his course, with varied art:
Against her frowns, against her smiles,
Firm faith securely guards his heart.

In works of piety to God,
And love to man, he spends his years;
And when he feels affliction's rod,
Sweet peace is mingled with his tears.

His life with growing lustre shines
Till all the toils of life are past:
His breath then calmly he resigns,
Trusting his Saviour to the last.

Attendant angels, while they sing
His victory, their friend convey
Up to the presence of their King,
The region of eternal day.

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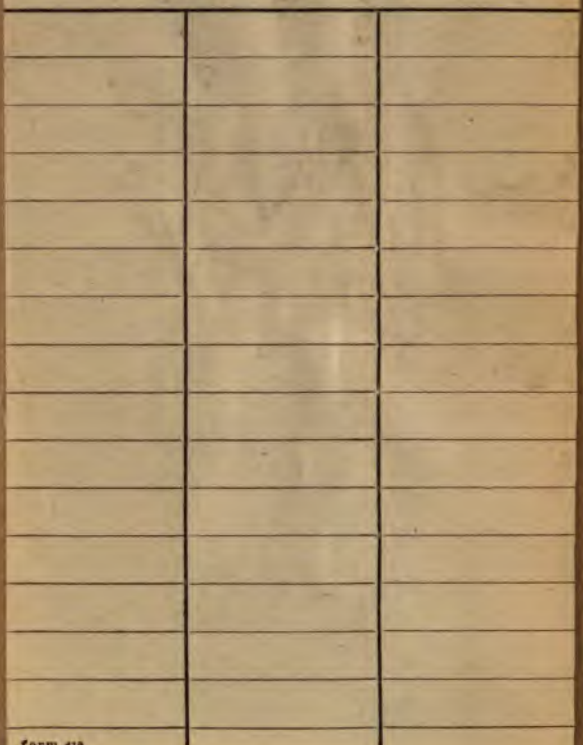

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